J. E. HORAN
NO.....

LYOF N. TOLSTOÏ

XX

ESSAYS, LETTERS, AND MISCELLANIES

THE NOVELS AND OTHER WORKS OF

LYOF N. TOLSTOÏ

ESSAYS, LETTERS MISCELLANIES

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INTRODUCTION

CONTROVERSIAL articles, essays on timely topics,— arbitration, liquor drinking, vegetarianism, non-resistance, disarmament, — prefaces, private and public letters, magnanimous defense of the persecuted Dukhobors or spirit wrestlers, and reports on the famine-stricken districts of Russia make up the bulk of the present volume, which will be found to contain some of the author's most vigorous and most characteristic utterances.

The famine articles, relating the measures instituted to assist the depressed and demoralized peasantry, and picturing the terrible conditions under which no small part of the population of Russia is degenerating, are intensely interesting. There are details which are like extracts from a novelist's note-book. Count Tolstoï lays his finger on the deep, underlying causes of the famine: it is not crop failures; it is not a material, but a moral, famine. The differences between these papers published in the Russian edition and those that have found their way into print in Switzerland or elsewhere throw a curious light on the operations of the censorship. It is evident that the government fears the light of truth, and resents any criticism on its methods of dealing with its internal affairs. Yet no unprejudiced person can fail to accept Count Tolstoï's theory that the paternalism which makes a child of the peasant, subjecting him to the whims of all sorts of function-

aries, destroying his self-respect by flogging and his dignity by a State religion which does not appeal to his conscience, is bringing ruin upon Russia. The peasantry is the very bone and sinew of a country, and when agriculture fails, the country is doomed. Count Tolstoï advocates greater freedom of education, of religion, of movement, and he predicts that prosperity would soon return, and the chronic state of famine now obtaining and growing worse year after year would correct itself, if the terrible exactions of government would cease.

He returns again and again to his plea for Christians to unite on the five simple commands of Christ and put them into practice. The "Three Parables" and the "Letter to N. N." contain a rather unusual and pathetic personal note which cannot help touching the heart, bringing out so evidently the man's generous sincerity and simplicity.

His application of the rule of non-resistance to the tremendous international questions which are keeping Europe, and, indeed, the whole world, in the condition of a vast mine of dynamite, ready at any instant to explode with unimaginable consequences, is perhaps his most important contribution to the practical solution of the difficulty which confronts humanity at the present time. Occasionally a single man, or even a whole body of men, like the Dukhobors, who have been transported *en masse* to the Canadian wilderness, refuse to bear arms from conscientious motives. Count Tolstoï sees that the simplest and easiest method of disposing of the question of excessive armament of the nations is for all men to follow their example. War would then cease from sheer inertia. If every man in Russia refused to

enter the army, the army would cease, and the millions of armed men which are now devouring like caterpillars would return to their peaceful vocations and bring prosperity to the tormented land.

His plea against the use of intoxicants is as chivalrous and convincing as anything that he has ever written. Possibly the believer in a moderate use of light wines will charge him with fanatic extravagance, but no one can doubt his zeal or his genuineness of conviction.

Taking the volume as a whole, though not free from a certain necessary fragmentariness, its consistency and its vitality — its inherent power to interest — will be found no less marked than previous volumes, though they be more coherent. It represents the present activity of the count, who, having passed his seventy-first birthday, still takes an intelligent and lively interest in whatever affects the welfare of humanity; like a prophet he sends forth his clarion voice against the oppressions of power and the dangerous teaching of a pseudo-Christianity. In this respect the volume excels in interest all the others, just as a man's personality must be superior to what he produces. It is a sort of epitome of the life of a man who towers head and shoulders above the great men of his own country, and either now does, or is destined to, wield a greater influence than any other man of the century.

The translations in the present volume are due to several hands, but a large number of them have been made by Mr. Aylmer Maude of England, who is a personal friend of Count Tolstoï, and in immediate touch with his industrial, religious, and social activities. Many of the articles thus furnished have been from sources otherwise unattainable.

PATRIOTISM AND CHRISTIANITY[1]

THE Franco-Russian festivities which took place in October, 1894, in France made me, and others, no doubt, as well, first amused, then astonished, then indignant — feelings which I wished to express in a short article.

But while studying further the chief causes of this strange phenomenon, I arrived at the reflections which I here offer to the reader.

I

THE Russian and French peoples have been living for many centuries with a knowledge of each other — entering sometimes into friendly, more often, unfortunately, into very unfriendly, relations at the instigation of their respective governments — when suddenly, because two years ago a French squadron came to Kronstadt, and its officers, having landed, eaten much, and drunk a

[1] In this remarkable work by Count Tolstoï, which powerfully aroused European attention, the principle of "non-resistance," which is so often, by opponents, made to take a *doctrinaire*, or even absurd complexion, is seen in drastic application to the huge militarism under which the world groans. As reasonable people, following Tolstoï, we must ask: "What other principle of conduct than this can possibly remove the incubus?"

To those living outside of Europe, the unusual contentions of this work may not seem so startling as to those who live under a system of compulsory military service. But a little thought reminds us that we also maintain hundreds of thousands of fighting men, and that in paying taxes for government purposes, we are responsible for the appearance, upon the sea and in the field, of those whom Tolstoï might call "licensed murderers." So that the obligation of conscience raised by this book is equally binding upon all, whether Russian or English, French or American. — TR.

variety of wine in various places, heard and made many false and foolish speeches; and because last year a Russian squadron arrived at Toulon, and its officers, having gone to Paris and there eaten and drunk copiously, heard and made a still greater number of silly and untruthful speeches, — it came to pass that not only those who ate, drank, and spoke, but every one who was present, and even those who merely heard or read in the papers of these proceedings — all these millions of French and Russians — imagined suddenly that in some especial fashion they were enamored of each other; that is, that all the French love all the Russians, and all the Russians all the French.

These sentiments were expressed in France last October in the most unheard-of ways.

The following description of these proceedings appeared in the *Village Review*, a paper which collects its information from the daily press: —

"When the French and Russian squadrons met they greeted each other with salvos of artillery, and with ardent and enthusiastic cries of 'Hurrah!' 'Long live Russia!' 'Long live France!'

"To all this uproar the naval bands (there were orchestras also on most of the hired steamboats) contributed, the Russian playing 'God save the Tsar,' and the French the 'Marseillaise,' the public upon the steamboats waving their hats, flags, handkerchiefs, and nosegays. Many barges were loaded entirely with men and women of the working-class with their children, waving nosegays and shouting 'Long live Russia!' with all their might. Our sailors, in view of such national enthusiasm, could not restrain their tears.

"In the harbor all the French men-of-war present were ranged in two divisions, and our fleet passed between them, the admiral's vessel leading. A splendid moment was approaching.

"A salute of fifteen guns was fired from the Russian flagship in honor of the French fleet, and the French flagship replied with thirty. The Russian National Hymn pealed from the French lines; French sailors

mounted their masts and rigging; vociferations of welcome poured uninterruptedly from both fleets, and from the surrounding vessels. The sailors waved their caps, the spectators their hats and handkerchiefs, in honor of the beloved guests. From all sides, sea and shore, thundered the universal shout, 'Long live Russia!' 'Long live France!'

"According to the custom in naval visits, Admiral Avellan and the officers of his staff came on shore in order to pay their respects to the local authorities.

"At the landing-stage they were met by the French naval staff and the senior officials of the port of Toulon.

"Friendly greetings followed, accompanied by the thunder of artillery and the pealing of bells. The naval band played the Russian National Hymn, 'God save the Tsar,' which was received with a roar from the spectators of 'Long live the Tsar!' 'Long live Russia!'

"The shouting swelled into one mighty din, which drowned the music and even the cannonade. Those present declare that the enthusiasm of the huge crowd of people attained at that moment its utmost height, and that it would be impossible to express in words the feelings which overflowed the hearts of all upon the scene.

"Admiral Avellan, with uncovered head, and accompanied by the French and Russian officers, then drove to the naval administration buildings, where he was received by the French Minister of Marine.

"In welcoming the admiral, the minister said, 'Kronstadt and Toulon have severally witnessed the sympathy which exists between the French and the Russian peoples. Everywhere you will be received as the most welcome of friends.

"'Our government and all France greet you and your comrades on your arrival as the representatives of a great and honorable nation.'

"The admiral replied that he was unable to find language to express his feelings. 'The Russian fleet, and all Russia,' he said, 'will be grateful to you for this reception.'

"After some further speeches, the admiral again, in taking leave of the minister, thanked him for his reception, and added, 'I cannot leave you without pronouncing the words which are written in the hearts of every Russian: 'Long live France!'"[1]

Such was the reception at Toulon. In Paris the welcome and the festivities were still more extraordinary.

The following is a description, taken from the papers, of the reception in Paris:—

"All eyes are directed toward the Boulevard des Italiens, whence the Russian sailors are expected to emerge. At length, far away, the roar of a whole hurricane of shouts and cheers is heard. The roar grows louder, more distinct. The hurricane is evidently approaching. The crowd surges in the Place. The police press forward to clear the route to the Cercle Militaire, but the task is not easy. Among the spectators the pushing and scrambling baffles description. .... At last the head of the cortège appears in the Place. At once arises a deafening shout of 'Vive la Russie! Vivent les Russes!'

"All heads are uncovered; spectators fill the windows and balconies, they even cover the housetops, waving handkerchiefs, flags, hats, cheering enthusiastically, and flinging clouds of tricolor cockades from the upper windows. A sea of handkerchiefs, hats, and flags waves over the heads of the crowd below; a hundred thousand voices shout frantically, 'Vive la Russie! Vivent les Russes;' the throng make wild efforts to catch a glimpse of the dear guests, and try in every possible way to express their enthusiasm."

Another correspondent writes that the rapture of the crowd was like a delirium. A Russian journalist who was in Paris at the time thus describes the entry of the Russian marines:—

"It may truthfully be said that this event is of universal importance, astounding, sufficiently touching to produce tears, an elevating influence on the soul, making it throb with *that love which sees in men brothers*,

[1] *Siel'sky Vyestnik*, 1893, No. 41.

which hates blood, and violence, and the snatching of children from a beloved mother. I have been in a kind of torpor for the last few hours. It seemed almost overpoweringly strange to stand in the terminus of the Lyons Railway, amid the representatives of the French government, in their uniforms embroidered with gold, amongst the municipal authorities in full dress, and to hear cries of 'Vive la Russie!' 'Vive le Tsar!' and our national anthem played again and again.

"Where am I? I reflected. What has happened? What magic current has united all these feelings, these aspirations, into one stream? Is not this the sensible presence of the God of love and of fraternity, the presence of the loftiest ideal descending in His supremest moments upon man?

"My soul is so full of something beautiful, pure, and elevated that my pen is unable to express it. Words are weak in comparison with what I saw and felt. It was not rapture, the word is too commonplace; it was better than rapture. More picturesque, deeper, happier, more various. It is impossible to describe what took place at the Cercle Militaire when Admiral Avellan appeared on the balcony of the second story. Words here are of no avail. During the 'Te Deum,' while the choir in the church was singing, 'O Lord, save Thy people,' through the open door were blown the triumphal strains of the 'Marseillaise,' played by the brass bands in the street.

"It produced an astounding, an inexpressible impression." [1]

II

On arriving in France the Russian sailors passed, during a fortnight, from one festivity to another, and during or after each they ate, drank, and made speeches. Information as to where and what they ate and drank on Wednesday, and where and what on Friday, and what they said on these occasions, was purveyed by telegraph to the whole of Russia.

[1] *Novoye Vremya* (New Time), Oct. 1893.

The moment one of the Russian commanders had drunk to the health of France, it became known to the whole world; and the instant the Russian admiral had said, "I drink to beautiful France," his effusion was transmitted round the globe. Moreover, for such was the solicitude of the papers that they commemorated not merely the toasts, but the dishes, not even omitting the hors-d'œuvres, or *zakouskas*, which were consumed.

For instance, the following menu was published, with the comment that the dinner it represented was a work of art:—

Consommé de volailles; petits pâtés.
Mousse de homard parisienne.
Noisette de bœuf à la béarnaise.
Faisans à la Périgueux.
Casseroles de truffes au champagne.
Chaudfroid de volailles à la Toulouse.
Salade russe.
Croûte de fruits toulonnaise.
Parfaits à l'ananas.
Dessert.

In a second number it said: "From a culinary standpoint nothing better could have been desired. The menu was the following:—

Potage livonien et Saint-Germaïn.
Zéphyrs Nontua.
Esturgeon braisé moldave.
Selle de daguet grand veneur. ... etc.

And a following issue gave still another menu. With each was a minute description of the wines which the feasters imbibed — such vodka, such old Burgundy, Grand Moët, etc.

In an English journal a list of all the intoxicating liquor drunk during the festivities was given. The quantity mentioned was so enormous that one hardly believes it would have been possible that all the drunkards in France and Russia could account for so much in so short a time.

The speeches made were also published, but the menus were more varied than the speeches. The latter, without exception, always consisted of the same

words in different combinations. The meaning of these words was always the same — We love each other tenderly, and are enraptured to be so tenderly in love. Our aim is not war, not a *revanche*, not the recovery of the lost provinces; our aim is only *peace*, the furtherance of *peace*, the security of *peace*, the tranquillity and *peace* of Europe.

Long live the Russian emperor and empress! We love them, and we love *peace*. Long live the President of the Republic and his wife! We love them and we love *peace*. Long live France, Russia, their fleets and their armies! We love the army, and *peace*, and the commander of the Russian fleet.

The speeches concluded for the most part, like some popular ditty, with a refrain, "Toulon-Kronstadt," or "Kronstadt-Toulon." And the reiteration of the names of these places, where so many different dishes had been eaten and so many kinds of wine drunk, were pronounced as words which should stimulate the representatives of either nation to the noblest deeds — as words which require no commentary, being full of deep meaning in themselves.

"We love each other; we love peace. Kronstadt-Toulon!" What more can be said, especially to the sound of glorious music, performing at one and the same time two national anthems — one glorifying the Tsar and praying for him all possible good fortune, the other cursing all tsars and promising them destruction?

Those that expressed their sentiments of love especially well on these occasions received orders and rewards. Others, either for the same reason or from the exuberance of the feelings of the givers, were presented with articles of the strangest and most unexpected kind. The French fleet presented the Tsar with a sort of golden book in which, it seems, nothing was written — or, at least, nothing of any concern; and the Russian admiral received an aluminium plow covered with flowers, and many other trifles equally astonishing.

Moreover, all these strange acts were accompanied by still stranger religious ceremonies and public services

such as one might suppose Frenchmen had long since become unaccustomed to.

Since the time of the Concordat scarcely so many prayers can have been offered as during this short period. All the French suddenly became extraordinarily religious, and carefully deposited in the rooms of the Russian mariners the very images which a short time previously they had as carefully removed from their schools as harmful tools of superstition; and they said prayers incessantly. The cardinals and bishops everywhere enjoined devotions, and themselves offered some of the strangest of prayers. Thus a bishop at Toulon, at the launch of a certain ironclad, addressed the God of Peace, letting it, however, at the same time be felt that he could communicate as readily, if the necessity arose, with the God of War.

"What its destination may be," said the bishop, alluding to the vessel, "God only knows. Will it vomit death from its dreadful maw? We do not know. But if, having to-day pleaded with the God of Peace, we may hereafter have to call upon the God of War, we may be sure that it will advance against the foe in rank with the powerful men-of-war whose crews have to-day entered into so near and fraternal union with ours. But let this contingency be forgotten, and let the present festival leave none but peaceful memories, like those of the Grand Duke Constantine,[1] who was here at the launch of the "Quirinal," and may the friendship of France and Russia constitute these two nations the guardians of peace!"

At the same time tens of thousands of telegrams flew from Russia to France and from France to Russia.

French women greeted Russian women, and Russian women tendered their thanks to the French. A troupe of Russian actors greeted the French actors; the French actors replied that they had laid deep in their hearts the greetings of their Russian colleagues.

The Russian law students of some Russian town or other expressed their rapture to the French nation. General So-and-so thanked Madame This-and-that;

[1] Constantine Nikolaevitch visited Toulon in 1857.

Madame This-and-that assured General So-and-so of the ardor of her sentiments toward the Russian nation. Russian children wrote greetings in verse to French children; and French children replied in verse and prose. The Russian Minister of Education assured the French Minister of Education of the sudden amity toward France of all the children, clerks, and scientists in his department. The members of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals expressed their warm attachment toward the French. The municipality of Kazan did the same.

The canon of Arrare conveyed to the most reverend protopresbyter of the court clergy the assurance that a deep affection toward Russia, his imperial majesty the Emperor Alexander III, and all the imperial family, exists in the hearts of all the French cardinals and bishops, and that the French and Russian clergy profess almost a similar faith, and alike worship the Holy Virgin. To this the most reverend protopresbyter replied that the prayers of the French clergy for the imperial family were joyously echoed by the hearts of all the Russian people, lovingly attached to the Tsar, and that as the Russian nation also worships the Holy Virgin, France may count upon it in life and death. The same kind of messages were sent by various generals, telegraph clerks, and dealers in groceries.

Every one sent congratulations to every one else, and thanked some one for something.

The excitement was so great that some extraordinary things were done; and yet no one remarked their strangeness, but on the contrary every one approved of them, was charmed with them, and as if afraid of being left behind, made haste to accomplish something of a similar kind in order not to be outdone by the rest.

If at times protests, pronounced or even written and printed, against this madness made their appearance, proving its unreasonableness, they were either hushed up or concealed.[1]

[1] Thus I am aware of the following protest which was made by Russian students and sent to Paris, but not accepted by any of the papers: —

Not to mention the millions of working-days spent in these festivities; the widespread drunkenness of all who took part in them, involving even those in command; not to speak of the senselessness of the speeches which were made, — the most insane and ruthless deeds were committed, and no one paid them any attention.

For instance, several score of people were crushed

"An Open Letter to French Students

"A short time back a small body of Moscow law students, headed by its inspector, was bold enough to speak in the person of the university concerning the Toulon festivities.

"We, the representatives of the united students of various provinces, protest most emphatically against the pretensions of this body, and in substance against the interchange of greetings which has taken place between it and the French students. We likewise regard France with warm affection and deep respect, but we do so because we see in her a great nation which has always been in the past the introducer and announcer of the high ideals of freedom, equality, and brotherhood for all the world; and first also in the bold attempts to incorporate these high ideals into life. The better part of Russian youth has always been prepared to acclaim France as the foremost champion of a loftier future for mankind. But we do not regard such festivities as those of Kronstadt and Toulon as appropriate occasions for such greetings.

"On the contrary, these receptions represent a sad, but, we hope, a temporary condition — the treason of France to its former great historical rôle. The country which at one time invited all the world to break the chains of despotism, and offered its fraternal aid to any nation which might revolt in order to obtain its freedom, now burns incense before the Russian government, which systematically impedes the normal organic growth of a people's life, and relentlessly crushes without consideration every aspiration of Russian society toward light, freedom, and independence. The Toulon manifestations are one act of a drama in the antagonism between France and Germany created by Bismarck and Napoleon III.

"This antagonism keeps all Europe under arms, and gives the deciding vote in European affairs to Russian despotism, which has ever been the support of all that is arbitrary and absolute against freedom, and of tyrants against the tyrannized.

"A sense of pain for our country, of regret at the blindness of so great a portion of French society, these are the feelings called forth in us by these festivities.

"We are persuaded that the younger generation in France is not allured by national Chauvinism, and that, ready to struggle for that better social condition toward which humanity is advancing, it will know how to interpret present events, and what attitude to adopt toward them. We hope that our determined protest will find an echo in the hearts of the French youth.

(Signed) "The United Council of Twenty-four Federate Societies of Moscow Students."

to death, and no one found it necessary to record the fact.

One correspondent wrote that he had been informed at a ball that there was scarcely a woman in Paris who would not have been ready to forget her duties to satisfy the desire of any of the Russian sailors.

And all this passed unremarked as something quite in the order of things. There were also cases of unmistakable insanity brought about by the excitement.

Thus one woman, having put on a dress composed of the colors of the Franco-Russian flags, awaited on a bridge the arrival of the Russian sailors, and shouting "Vive la Russie," threw herself into the river, and was drowned.

In general the women on all these occasions played the leading part, and even directed the men. Besides the throwing of flowers and various little ribbons and the presenting of gifts and addresses, the French women in the streets threw themselves into the arms of the Russian sailors and kissed them.

Some women brought their children, for some reason or other, to be kissed, and when the Russian sailors had granted this request, all present were transported with joy and shed tears.

This strange excitement was so contagious that, as one correspondent relates, a Russian sailor who appeared to be in perfect health, after having witnessed these exciting scenes for a fortnight, jumped overboard in the middle of the day, and swam about, crying "Long live France." When pulled out of the water, and questioned as to his conduct, he replied that he had vowed to swim round his ship in honor of France.

Thus the unthwarted excitement grew and grew, like a ball of snow, and finally attained such dimensions that not alone those on the spot, or merely nervously predisposed persons, but strong, healthy men were affected by the general strain and were betrayed into an abnormal condition of mind.

I remember even that whilst reading distractedly a description of these festivities, I was suddenly overcome

by strong emotion, and was almost on the verge of tears, having to check with an effort this expression of my feelings.

III

A PROFESSOR of psychiatry, Sikorsky by name, not long ago described in the *Kief University Review* what he calls the psychopathic epidemic of Malevanshchina, which he studied in the district of Vasilkof. The essence of this epidemic, according to Sikorsky, was that the peasants of certain villages, under the influence of their leader, Malevanni, became convinced that the end of the world was at hand; in consequence of which they changed their mode of life, began to dispose of their property, to wear gay clothing, to eat and drink of the best, and ceased to work. The professor considered this condition abnormal. He says:

"Their remarkable good humor often attained to exaltation, a condition of gaiety lacking all external motives. They were sentimentally inclined, polite to excess, talkative, excitable, tears of happiness being readily summoned to their eyes, and disappearing without leaving a trace. They sold the necessities of life in order to buy parasols, silk handkerchiefs, and similar articles, which, however, they only wore as ornaments. They ate a great quantity of sweets. Their condition of mind was always joyous, they led a perfectly idle life, visiting one another and walking about together. .... When chided for the insanity of their conduct and their idleness, they replied invariably with the same phrase: 'If it pleases me, I will work; if it does not, why compel myself to?'"

The learned professor regards the condition of these people as a well-defined psychopathic epidemic, and in advising the government to adopt measures to prevent its extension, concludes, "Malevanshchina is the cry of a sick population, a prayer for deliverance from drunkenness, and for improved educational and sanitary conditions."

But if malevanshchina is the cry of a sick population for deliverance from inebriety and from pernicious social conditions, what a terrible clamor of a sick people, and what a petition for a rescue from the effects of wine and of a false social existence, is this new disease which appeared in Paris with such fearful suddenness, infecting the greater part of the urban population of France, and almost the entire governmental, privileged, and civilized classes of Russia?

But if we admit that danger exists in the psychical conditions of malevanshchina, and that the government did well in following the professor's advice, by confining some of the leaders of the malevanshchina in asylums and monasteries, and by banishing others into distant places; how much more dangerous must we consider this new epidemic which has appeared in Toulon and Paris, and spread thence throughout Russia and France, and how much more needful is it that society — if the government refuse to interfere — should take decisive measures to prevent the epidemic from spreading?

The analogy between the two diseases is complete. The same remarkable good humor, passing into a vague and joyous ecstasy, the same sentimental, exaggerated politeness, loquacity, emotional weeping, without reason for its commencement or cessation, the same festal mood, the same promenading and paying calls, the same wearing of gorgeous clothes and fancy for choice food, the same misty and senseless speeches, the same indolence, the same singing and music, the same direction on the part of the women, the same clownish state of *attitudes passionnées*, which Sikorsky observed, and which corresponds, as I understand it, with the various unnatural physical attitudes adopted by people during triumphal receptions, acclamations, and after-dinner speeches.

The resemblance is absolute. The difference, an enormous one for the society in which these things take place, is merely that in one case it is the madness of a few scores of poor peaceful country people who, living on their own small earnings, cannot do any violence to their neighbors, and infect others only by

personal and vocal communication of their condition; whereas in the other case it is the madness of millions of people who possess immense sums of money and means of violence, — rifles, cannon, fortresses, ironclads, melinite, dynamite, — and having, moreover, at their disposal the most effective means for communicating their insanity: the post, telegraph, telephone, the entire press, and every class of magazine, which print the infection with the utmost haste, and distribute it throughout the world.

Another difference is that the former not only remain sober, but abstain from all intoxicating drinks, while the latter are in a constant state of semi-drunkenness which they do their best to foster.

Hence for the society in which such epidemics take place, the difference between that at Kief, when, according to Sikorsky, no violence nor manslaughter was recorded, and that of Paris, where in one procession more than twenty women were crushed to death, is equivalent to that between the falling of a small piece of smoldering coal from the fireplace upon the floor, and a fire which has already obtained possession of the floors and walls of the house.

At its worst the result of the epidemic at Kief will be that the peasants of a millionth part of Russia may spend the earnings of their own labor, and be unable to meet the government taxes; but the consequences of the Paris-Toulon epidemic, which has affected people who have great power, immense sums of money, weapons of violence, and means for the propagation of their insanity, may and must be terrible.

IV

One may listen with compassion to the mouthings of a feeble, old, and unarmed idiot in his cap and night-shirt, not contradicting and even humorously acquiescing with him; but when a crowd of able-bodied madmen escape from confinement, armed to the teeth with knives,

swords, and revolvers, wild with excitement, waving their murderous weapons, one not only ceases to acquiesce, but one is unable to feel secure for an instant.

It is the same with the condition of excitement which has been evoked by the French festivities and which is now carrying French and Russian society away. Those who have succumbed to this psychopathic epidemic are the masters of the most terrible weapons of slaughter and destruction.

It is true that it was constantly proclaimed in all the speeches, in all the toasts pronounced at these festivities, and in all the articles upon them, that the object of what was taking place was the establishment of peace. Even the partisans of war, the Russian correspondent previously cited amongst them, speak not of any hatred toward the conquerors of the lost provinces, but of a love which somehow hates.

However, we are well aware of the cunning of those that suffer from mental diseases, and this constant iteration of a desire for peace, and silence as to the sentiments in every man's mind, is precisely a threat of the worst significance.

In his reply at the dinner at the Elysée the Russian ambassador said: —

"Before proposing a toast to which every one will respond from the depths of his soul, not only those within these walls, but also, and with the same enthusiasm, all those whose hearts are at the present moment beating in unison with ours, far away or around us in great and beautiful France, as in Russia, permit me to offer an expression of the deepest gratitude for the welcome, addressed by you to the admiral whom the Tsar deputed to return the Kronstadt visit. In the high position which you occupy, your words express the full meaning of the glorious and peaceful festivities which are now being celebrated with such remarkable unanimity, loyalty, and sincerity."

The same entirely baseless reference to peace may be found in the speech of the French president.

"The links of love which unite Russia and France," he said, "were strengthened two years ago by the touching

manifestations of which our fleet was the object at Kronstadt, and are becoming every day more binding; and the *honest* interchange of our friendly sentiments must inspire all those who have at heart the welfare of peace, security, and confidence," etc.

In both speeches the benefits of peace, and of peaceful festivities, are alluded to quite unexpectedly and without any occasion.

The same thing is observable in the interchange of telegrams between the Russian emperor and the president of the Republic.

The emperor telegraphs: —

"At the moment when the Russian fleet is leaving France it is my ardent wish to express to you how touched and gratified I am by the chivalrous and splendid reception which my sailors have everywhere experienced on French soil. The expressions of warm sympathy which have been manifested once again with so much eloquence will add a fresh bond to those which unite the two countries, and will, I trust, contribute to strengthen the general *peace* which is the object of our most constant efforts and desires."

The French president replies: —

"The telegram, for which I thank your majesty, reached me when on the point of leaving Toulon to return to Paris.

"The magnificent fleet on which I had the great satisfaction of saluting the Russian pennant in French waters, the cordial and spontaneous reception which your brave sailors have everywhere received in France, prove gloriously once again the sincere sympathies which unite our two countries. They show at the same time a deep faith in the beneficent influence which may weld together two great nations devoted to the cause of *peace*."

Again, in both telegrams, without the slightest occasion, are allusions to peace which have nothing at all to do with the reception of the sailors.

There is no single speech or article in which it is not said that the purpose of all these orgies is the peace of

Europe. At a dinner given by the representatives of the Russian press, all speak of peace. M. Zola, who, a short time previously, had written that war was inevitable, and even serviceable; M. de Vogüé, who more than once has stated the same in print, — say, neither of them, a word as to war, but speak only of peace. The sessions of parliament open with speeches upon the past festivities; the speakers mention that such festivities are an assurance of peace to Europe.

It is as if a man should come into a peaceful company, and commence energetically to assure every one present that he has not the least intention of knocking out any one's teeth, blackening their eyes, or breaking their arms, but has only the most peaceful ideas for passing the evening.

"But no one doubts it," one is inclined to say, "and if you really have such evil intentions, at least do not presume to mention them."

In many of the articles describing the festivities a naïve satisfaction is clearly expressed that no one during them alluded to what it was determined, by silent consent, to hide from everybody, and that only one incautious fellow, who was immediately removed by the police, voiced what all had in their minds by shouting, "*À bas l'Allemagne!*" — Down with Germany!

In the same way children are often so delighted at being able to conceal an escapade that their very high spirits betray them.

Why, indeed, be so glad that no one said anything about war, if the subject were not uppermost in our minds?

V

No one is thinking of war; only milliards are being spent upon preparations for it, and millions of men are under arms in France and Russia.

"But all this is done to insure peace. *Si vis pacem para bellum. L'empire c'est la paix. La République c'est la paix.*"

But if such be the case, why are the military advantages of a Franco-Russian alliance in the event of a war with Germany not only explained in every paper and magazine published for a so-called educated people, but also in the *Village Messenger*, a paper published for the people by the Russian government? Why is it inculcated to this unfortunate people, cheated by its own government, that "to be in friendly relations with France is profitable to Russia, because if, unexpectedly, the before-mentioned states (Germany, Austria, and Italy) made up their minds to declare war with Russia, then, though with God's help she might be able to withstand them by herself, and defeat even so considerable an alliance, the feat would not be an easy one, and great sacrifices and losses would be entailed by success." [1]

And why in all French schools is history taught from the primer of M. Lavisse (twenty-first edition, 1889,) in which the following is inserted: —

"Since the insurrection of the Commune was put down France has had no further troubles. The day following the war she again resumed work. She paid Germany without difficulty the enormous war indemnity of five milliards.

"But France lost her military renown during the war of 1870. She lost part of her territory. More than fifteen thousand inhabitants of our departments of the Upper Rhine, Lower Rhine, and the Moselle who were good Frenchmen have been compelled to become Germans. But they are not resigned to their fate. They detest Germany; they continue to hope that they may once more be Frenchmen.

"But Germany appreciates its victory, and it is a great country, all the inhabitants of which sincerely love their fatherland, and whose soldiers are brave and well disciplined. In order to recover from Germany what she took from us we must be good citizens and soldiers. It is to make you good soldiers that your teachers instruct you in the history of France.

"The history of France proves that in our country the sons have always avenged the disasters of their fathers.

[1] *Siel'sky Viestnik*, 1893, No. 43.

"Frenchmen in the time of Charles VII. avenged the defeat of their fathers at Crécy, at Poitiers, at Agincourt.

"It is for you, boys being educated in our schools, to avenge the defeat of your fathers at Sedan and at Metz.

"It is your duty — the great duty of your life. You must ever bear that in mind."

At the foot of the page is a series of questions upon the preceding paragraphs. The questions are the following: —

"What has France lost by losing part of her territory?"

"How many Frenchmen have become Germans by the loss of this territory?"

"Do these Frenchmen love Germany?"

"What must we do to recover some day what Germany has taken from us?"

In addition to these there are certain "Reflections on Book VII.," where it is said that "the children of France must not forget her defeat of 1870"; that they must bear on their hearts the burden of this remembrance," but that "this memory must not discourage them, on the contrary, it must excite their courage."

So that if, in official speeches, peace is mentioned with such emphasis, behind the scenes the lawfulness, profit, and necessity of war is incessantly urged upon the people, the rising generation, and in general upon all Frenchmen and Russians.

"We do not think of war, we are only working for peace."

One feels inclined to inquire, "*Qui diable trompe-t-on ici?*" if the question were worth asking, and it were not too evident who are the unhappy deluded ones.

The deluded ones are always the same eternally deluded, foolish working-folk, those who, with horny hands, make all these ships, forts, arsenals, barracks, cannon, steamers, harbors, piers, palaces, halls, and places with triumphal arches, and who print all these books and papers, and who procure and transport all these pheasants and ortolans and oysters and wines which are to be eaten and drunk by those who are brought up, educated,

and maintained by the working-class, and who, in turn, deceive and prepare for it the worst disasters.

Always the same good-natured, foolish working-folk, who, yawning, showing their white, healthy teeth, childishly and naïvely pleased at the sight of admirals and presidents in full dress, of flags waving above their heads, and fireworks, and triumphal music; for whom, before they can look round, there will be no more admirals, or presidents, or flags, or music; but only a damp and empty field of battle, cold, hunger, and pain; before them a murderous enemy; behind, relentless officers preventing their escape; blood, wounds, putrefying bodies, and senseless, unnecessary death.

While, on the other hand, those who have been made much of at Paris and Toulon will be seated, after a good dinner, with glasses of choice wine beside them and cigars between their teeth, in a warm cloth tent, marking upon a map with pins such and such places upon which a certain amount of "food for cannon" is to be expended — "food" composed of those same foolish people — in order finally to capture this fortified place or the other, and to obtain a certain little ribbon or grade.

VI

"But nothing of the kind exists; we have no bellicose intentions," it is replied. "All that has happened is the expression of mutual sympathy between two nations. What can be amiss in the triumphal and honorable reception of the representatives of a friendly nation by the representatives of another nation? What can be wrong in this, even if we admit that the alliance is significant of a protection from a dangerous neighbor who threatens Europe with war?"

It is wrong, because it is false — a most evident and insolent falsehood, inexcusable, iniquitous.

It is false, this suddenly begotten love of Russians

for French and French for Russians. And it is false, this insinuation of our dislike to the Germans, and our distrust of them. And more false still is it that the aim of all these indecent and insane orgies is supposed to be the preservation of the peace of Europe.

We are all aware that we neither felt before, nor have felt since, any special love for the French, or any animosity toward the Germans.

We are told that Germany has projects against Russia, that the Triple Alliance threatens to destroy our peace and that of Europe, and that our alliance with France will secure an equal balance of power and be a guarantee of peace. But the assertion is so manifestly stupid that I am ashamed to refute it seriously. For this to be so — that is, for the alliance to guarantee peace — it would be necessary to make the Powers mathematically equal. If the preponderance were on the side of the Franco-Russian alliance, the danger would be the same, or even greater, because if Wilhelm, who is at the head of the Triple Alliance, is a menace to peace, France, who cannot be reconciled to the loss of her provinces, would be a still greater menace. The Triple Alliance was called an alliance of peace, whereas for us it proved an alliance of war. Just so now the Franco-Russian alliance can only be viewed truly as an alliance for war.

Moreover, if peace depend upon an even balance of power, how are those units to be defined between which the balance is to be established?

England asserts that the Franco-Russian alliance is a menace to her security, which necessitates a new alliance on her part. And into precisely how many units is Europe to be divided that this even balance may be attained?

Indeed, if there be such a necessity for equilibrium, then in every society of men a man stronger than his fellows is already dangerous, and the rest must join defensive alliances in order to resist him.

It is asked, "What is wrong in France and Russia expressing their mutual sympathies for the preservation of

peace?" The expression is wrong because it is false, and a falsehood once pronounced never ends harmlessly.

The devil was a murderer and the father of lies. Falsehood always leads to murder; and most of all in such a case as this.

Just what is now taking place occurred before our last Turkish war, when a sudden love on our part was supposed to have been awakened toward certain Slavonic brethren none had heard of for centuries; though French, Germans, and English always have been, and are, incomparably nearer and dearer to us than a few Bulgarians, Servians, or Montenegrins. And on that occasion just the same enthusiasm, receptions, and solemnities were to be observed, blown into existence by men like Aksakof and Katkof, who are already mentioned in Paris as model patriots. Then, as now, the suddenly begotten love of Russ for Slav was only a thing of words.

Then in Moscow as now in Paris, when the affair began, people ate, drank, talked nonsense to one another, were much affected by their noble feelings, spoke of union and of peace, passing over in silence the main business — the project against Turkey.

The press goaded on the excitement, and by degrees the government took a hand in the game. Servia revolted. Diplomatic notes began to circulate and semi-official articles to appear. The press lied, invented, and fumed more and more, and in the end Alexander II., who really did not desire war, was obliged to consent to it; and what we know took place, the loss of hundreds of thousands of innocent men, and the brutalizing and befooling of millions.

What took place at Paris and Toulon, and has since been fomented by the press, is evidently leading to a like or a worse calamity.

At first, in the same manner, to the strains of the "Marseillaise" and "God save the Tsar," certain generals and ministers drink to France and Russia in honor of various regiments and fleets; the press publishes its falsehoods; idle crowds of wealthy people, not

knowing how to apply their strength and time, chatter patriotic speeches, stirring up animosity against Germany; and in the end, however peaceful Alexander III. may be, circumstances will so combine that he will be unable to avoid war, which will be demanded by all who surround him, by the press, and, as always seems in such cases, by the entire public opinion of the nation. And before we can look round, the usual ominous absurd proclamation will appear in the papers: —

"We, by God's grace, the autocratic great Emperor of all Russia, King of Poland, Grand Duke of Finland, etc., etc., proclaim to all our true subjects, that, for the welfare of these our beloved subjects, bequeathed by God into our care, we have found it our duty before God to send them to slaughter. God be with us."

The bells will peal, long-haired men will dress in golden sacks and pray for successful slaughter. And the old story will begin again, the awful customary acts.

The editors of the daily press, happy in the receipt of an increased income, will begin virulently to stir men up to hatred and manslaughter in the name of patriotism. Manufacturers, merchants, contractors for military stores will hurry joyously about their business, in the hope of double receipts.

All sorts of government functionaries will buzz about, foreseeing a possibility of purloining something more than usual. The military authorities will hurry hither and thither, drawing double pay and rations, and with the expectation of receiving for the slaughter of other men various silly little ornaments which they so highly prize, as ribbons, crosses, orders, and stars. Idle ladies and gentlemen will make a great fuss, entering their names in advance for the Red Cross Society, and ready to bind up the wounds of those whom their husbands and brothers will mutilate, and they will imagine that in so doing they are performing a most Christian work.

And, smothering despair within their souls by songs, licentiousness, and wine, men will trail along, torn from peaceful labor, from their wives, mothers, and children, — hundreds of thousands of simple-minded, good-natured

men with murderous weapons in their hands, — anywhere they may be driven.

They will march, freeze, hunger, suffer sickness, and die from it, or finally come to some place where they will be slain by thousands, or kill thousands themselves with no reason — men whom they have never seen before, and who neither have done nor could do them any mischief.

And when the number of sick, wounded, and killed becomes so great that there are not hands enough left to pick them up, and when the air is so infected with the putrefying scent of the "food for cannon" that even the authorities find it disagreeable, a truce will be made, the wounded will be picked up anyhow, the sick will be brought in and huddled together in heaps, the killed will be covered with earth and lime, and once more all the crowd of deluded men will be led on and on till those who have devised the project weary of it, or till those who thought to find it profitable receive their spoil.

And so once more men will be made savage, fierce, and brutal, and love will wane in the world, and the Christianizing of mankind, which has already begun, will lapse for scores and hundreds of years. And so once more the men who reaped profit from it all will assert with assurance that since there has been a war there must needs have been one, and that other wars must follow, and they will again prepare future generations for a continuance of slaughter, depraving them from their childhood.

VII

Hence, when such patriotic demonstrations as the Toulon festivities take place, — though they only constrain from a distance the wills of men, and bind them to those accustomed villainies which are always the outcome of patriotism, — every one who realizes the true import of these festivities cannot but protest against

what is tacitly included in them. And, therefore, when those gentlemen, the journalists, assert that every Russian sympathizes with what took place at Kronstadt, Toulon, and Paris, and that this alliance for life and death is sealed by the desire of the entire nation; and when the Russian Minister of Education assures the French minister that all his brigade of children, clerks, and scientists share his feelings; or when the commander of a Russian squadron assures the French that all Russia will be grateful to them for their reception; and when protopresbyters answer for their flock, and assert that the prayers of Frenchmen for the welfare of the imperial house are joyously echoed in the hearts of the Russian *Tsar-loving* nation; and when the Russian ambassador in Paris, as the representative of the Russian people, states, after a dish of *ortolans à la soubise*, or *lagopèdes glacés*, with a glass of Grand Moët champagne in his hand, that all Russian hearts, beating in unison with his heart, are filled with sudden and exclusive love for *la belle France*, — then we, men not yet idiots, regard it as a sacred duty, not only for ourselves, but for tens of millions of Russians, to protest most energetically against such a statement, and to affirm that our hearts do not beat in unison with those of these gentlemen, — the journalists, ministers of education, commanders of squadrons, protopresbyters, and ambassadors; but on the contrary, are filled with indignation and disgust at the pernicious falsehood and wrong which, consciously or unconsciously, they are spreading by their words and deeds. Let them drink as much Moët as they please; let them write articles and make speeches from themselves and for themselves; but we who regard ourselves as Christians, cannot admit that what all these gentlemen write and say is binding upon us.

This we cannot admit because we know what lies hidden beneath at these tipsy ecstasies, speeches, and embracings, which resemble, not a confirmation of peace as we are assured, but rather those orgies and revelings to which criminals are addicted when planning their joint crimes.

VIII

About four years ago the first swallow of this Toulon spring, a well-known French agitator for a war with Germany, came to Russia to prepare the way for the Franco-Russian alliance, and paid a visit to us in the country. He came to us when we were all engaged cutting the hay crop, and when we had come into lunch and made our guest's acquaintance, he began at once to tell us how he had fought, been taken prisoner, made his escape, and finally pledged himself as a patriot — a fact of which he was evidently proud — never to cease agitating for a war with Germany until the boundaries and glory of France had been reëstablished.

All our guest's arguments as to the necessity of an alliance of France with Russia in order to reconstruct the former boundary, power, and glory of his country, and to assure our security against the evil intentions of Germany, had no success in our circle.

To his arguments that France could never settle down until she had recaptured her lost provinces, we replied that neither could Russia be at rest till she had been avenged for Jena, and that if the *revanche* of France should happen to be successful, Germany in her turn would desire revenge, and so on without end.

To his arguments that it was the duty of France to recover the sons that had been snatched from her, we replied that the condition of the majority of the working population of Alsace-Lorraine under the rule of Germany had probably suffered no change for the worse since the days when it was ruled by France, and the fact that some of the Alsatians preferred to be registered as Frenchmen and not as Germans, and that he, our guest, wished to reëstablish the fame of the French arms, was no reason to renew the awful calamities which a war would cause, or even to sacrifice a single human life.

To his arguments that it was very well for us to talk like that, who had never endured what France had, and

that we would speak very differently if the Baltic provinces, or Poland, were to be taken from us, we replied that, even from the imperial standpoint, the loss of the Baltic provinces or Poland could in no wise be considered as a calamity, but rather as an advantage, as it would decrease the necessity of armed forces and State expenses; and that from the Christian point of view one can never admit the justice of war, as war demands murder; while Christianity not only prohibits all killing, but demands of us the betterment of all men, regarding all men as brothers, without distinction of nationalities.

A Christian nation, we said, which engages in war, ought, in order to be logical, not only to take down the cross from its church steeples, turn the churches to some other use, give the clergy other duties, having first prohibited the preaching of the Gospel, but also ought to abandon all the requirements of morality which flow from the Christian law.

"*C'est à prendre ou à laisser*," we said. Until Christianity be abolished it is only possible to attract mankind toward war by cunning and fraud, as now practised. We who see this fraud and cunning cannot give way to it.

Since, during this conversation, there was no music or champagne, or anything to confuse our senses, our guest merely shrugged his shoulders, and, with the amiability of a Frenchman, said he was very grateful for the cordial welcome he had experienced in our house, but was sorry that his views were not as well received.

IX

After this conversation we went out into the hay-field, where our guest, hoping to find the peasants more in sympathy with his ideas, asked me to translate to an old, sickly muzhik, Prokophy by name — who, though suffering from severe hernia, was still working energetically, mowing with us, — his plan for putting pressure on Germany from both sides, the Russian and the French.

The Frenchman explained this to him graphically, by pressing with his white fingers on either side of the mower's coarse shirt, which was damp with perspiration.

I well remember Prokophy's good-humored smile of astonishment when I explained the meaning of the Frenchman's words and action. He evidently took the proposal to squeeze the Germans as a joke, not conceiving that a full-grown and educated man would quietly and soberly speak of war as being desirable.

"Well, but, if we squeeze him from both sides," he answered, smiling, giving one pleasantry for another, as he supposed, "he will be fixed too fast to move. We shall have to let him out somewhere."

I translated this answer to my guest.

"Tell him we love the Russians," he said.

These words astonished Prokophy even more than the proposal to squeeze the Germans, and awoke in him a certain feeling of suspicion.

"Whence does he come?" he inquired.

I replied that he was a wealthy Frenchman.

"And what business has brought him here?" he asked.

When I replied that the Frenchman had come in the hope of persuading the Russians to enter into an alliance with the French in the event of a war with Germany, Prokophy was clearly entirely displeased, and, turning to the women who were sitting close by on a cock of hay, called out to them, in an angry voice, which unwittingly displayed the feelings which had been aroused in him, to go and stack the rest of the hay.

"Well, you crows," he cried, "you are all asleep! Go and stack! A nice time for squeezing the Germans! Look there, the hay has not been turned yet, and it looks as if we might have to begin on the corn on Wednesday." And then, as if afraid of having offended our visitor, he added, smiling good-naturedly and showing his worn teeth, "Better come and work with us, and bring the Germans too. And when we have finished we will have some feasting, and make the Germans join us. They are men like ourselves."

And so saying Prokophy took his sinewy hand from the fork of the rake on which he had been leaning, lifted it on to his shoulder, and went to join the women.

"Oh, le brave homme!" exclaimed the polite Frenchman, laughing. And thus was concluded for the time his diplomatic mission to the Russian people.

The different aspects of these two men — one shining with freshness and high spirits, dressed in a coat of the latest cut, displaying with his white hands, which had never known labor, how the Germans should be squeezed; the other coarse, with haydust in his hair, shrunken with hard work, sunburnt, always weary, and, notwithstanding his severe complaint, always at work: Prokophy, with his fingers swollen with toil, in his large home-made trousers, worn-out shoes, and a great heap of hay upon his shoulders, moving slowly along with that careful economy of stride common to all workingmen, — the different aspects of these two men made much clear to me at the time, which has come back to me vividly since the Toulon-Paris festivities.

One of them represented the class fed and maintained by the people's labor, who in return use up that people as "food for cannon"; while the other was that very "food for cannon" which feeds and maintains those who afterwards so dispose of it.

X

"But France has lost two provinces — children torn from a beloved mother. And Russia cannot permit Germany to make laws for her and rob her of her historical mission in the East, nor risk the chance of losing, like France, her Baltic provinces, Poland, or the Caucasus.

"And Germany cannot hear of the loss of those advantages which she has won at such a sacrifice. And England will yield to none her naval supremacy."

After such word it is generally supposed that a Frenchman, Russian, German, or Englishman should

be ready to sacrifice anything, to regain his lost provinces, establish his influence in the East, secure national unity, or keep his control of the seas.

It is assumed that patriotism is, to start with, a sentiment natural to all men, and that, secondly, it is so highly moral a sentiment that it should be induced in all who have it not.

But neither one nor the other is true. I have lived half-a-century amid the Russian people, and in the great mass of laborers, during that period, I have never once seen or heard any manifestation or expression of this sentiment of patriotism, unless one should count those patriotic phrases which are learned by heart in the army, and repeated from books by the more superficial and degraded of the populace. I have never heard from the people any expression of patriotism, but, on the contrary, I have often listened to expressions of indifference, and even contempt, for any kind of patriotism, by the most venerable and serious of working-folk. I have observed the same thing amongst the laboring classes of other nations, and have received confirmation from educated Frenchmen, Germans, and Englishmen, from observation of their respective working-classes.

The working-classes are too much occupied supporting the lives of themselves and of their families, a duty which engrosses all their attention, to be able to take an interest in those political questions which are the chief motives of patriotism.

Questions as to the influence of Russia in the East, the unity of Germany, the recovery by France of her lost provinces, or the concession of such a part of one state to another state, do not interest the working-man, not only because, for the most part, he is unacquainted with the circumstances which evoke such questions, but also because the interests of his life are altogether independent of the state and of politics. For a laboring man is altogether indifferent where such-and-such a frontier may be established, to whom Constantinople may belong, whether Saxony or Brunswick shall or shall not be a member of the German Federation,

whether Australia or Montebello shall belong to England, or even to what government they may have to pay taxes, or into what army send their sons.

But it is always a matter of importance to them to know what taxes they will have to pay, how long to serve in the army, how much to pay for their land, and how much to receive for their labor — all questions entirely independent of State and political interests. This is the reason why, notwithstanding the energetic means employed by governments to inculcate patriotism, which is not natural to the people, and to destroy socialism, the latter continues to penetrate further into the laboring masses; whereas patriotism, though so assiduously inculcated, not only makes no headway, but disappears constantly more and more, and is now solely a possession of the upper classes, to whom it is profitable. And if, as sometimes happens, that patriotism takes hold of the masses, as lately in Paris, it is only when the masses have been subjected to some special hypnotic influence by the government and ruling class, and such patriotism lasts only as long as the influence is continued.

Thus, for instance, in Russia, where patriotism, in the form of love for and devotion to the faith, Tsar, and country, is instilled into the people, with extraordinary energy by every means in the hands of the government, — the Church, schools, literature, and every sort of pompous ceremony — the Russian working-man, the hundred millions of the working people, in spite of their undeserved reputation for devotion to faith, Tsar, and country, are a people singularly unduped by patriotism and such devotion.

They are not, for the most part, even acquainted with the orthodox official faith to which they are supposed to be so attached, and whenever they do make acquaintance with it they leave it and become rationalists, — that is, they adopt a creed which cannot be attacked and need not be defended; and notwithstanding the constant, energetic insistence of devotion to the Tsar, they regard in general all authority founded on violence either with condemnation or with total indifference;

their country, if by that word anything is meant outside their village and district, they either do not realize at all, or, if they do, would make no distinctions between it and other countries. So that where formerly Russians would emigrate into Austria or Turkey, they now go with equal indifference in Russia or outside of Russia, in Turkey, or China.

XI

An old friend of mine, who passed the winters alone in the country while his wife, whom he visited from time to time, lived in Paris, often conversed during the long autumn evenings with his steward, an illiterate but shrewd and venerable peasant, who used to come to him in the evening to receive his orders; and my friend once mentioned amongst other things the advantages of the French system of government compared with our own. The occasion was a short time previous to the last Polish insurrection and the intervention of the French government in our affairs. At that time the patriotic Russian press was burning with indignation at this interference, and so excited the ruling classes that our political relations became very strained, and there were rumors of an approaching war with France.

My friend, having read the papers, explained to this peasant the misunderstanding between France and Russia; and coming under the influence of the journal, and being an old military man, said that were war to be declared he would reënter the army and fight with France. At that time a *revanche* against the French for Sevastopol was considered a necessity by patriotic Russians.

"Why should we fight with them?" asked the peasant.

"Why, how can we permit France to dictate to us?"

"Well, you said yourself that they were better governed than we," replied the peasant quite seriously; "let them arrange things as well in Russia."

And my friend told me that he was so taken aback by this argument that he did not know what to reply, and burst into laughter, as one who has just awaked from a delusive dream.

The same argument may be heard from every Russian workman if he has not come under the hypnotic influence of the government. People speak of the Russian's love for his faith, Tsar, and country; and yet a single community of peasants could not be found in Russia which would hesitate one moment had they to choose of two places for emigration — one in Russia, under the "Father-Tsar" (as he is termed only in books), and the holy orthodox faith of his idolized country, but with less or worse land; and the other without the "White-father-Tsar," and without the orthodox faith, somewhere outside Russia, in Prussia, China, Turkey, Austria, only with more and better land — the choice would be in favor of the latter, as we have often had opportunity to observe.

The question as to who shall govern him (and he knows that under any government he will be equally robbed) is for the Russian peasant of infinitely less significance than the question (setting aside even the matter of water), Is the clay soft and will cabbage thrive in it?

But it might be supposed that this indifference on the part of Russians arises from the fact that any government under which they might live would be an improvement on their own, because in Europe there is none worse. But that is not so; for as far as I can judge, one may witness the same indifference among English, Dutch, and German peasants emigrating to America, and among the various nationalities which have emigrated to Russia.

Passing from the control of one European government to another — from Turkish to Austrian, or from French to German — alters so slightly the position of the genuine working-classes, that in no case would the change excite any discontent, if only it be not effected artificially by the government and the ruling classes.

XII

USUALLY, for a proof of the existence of patriotism one is referred to the display of patriotic sentiment by the people on certain solemn occasions, as in Russia, at the coronation of the Tsar, or his reception after the railway accident on October 29; in France, on the proclamation of war with Prussia; in Germany at the rejoicings after the war; or during the Franco-Russian festivities.

But one ought to take into consideration the way these manifestations are arranged. In Russia, for example, during every progress of the sovereign, delegates are commanded to appear from every peasant community, and materials requisitioned for the reception and welcome of the Tsar.

The enthusiasm of the crowd is for the most part artificially prepared by those who require it, and the degree of enthusiasm exhibited by the crowd is only a clue to the refinements in the art of those who organize such exhibitions. The art has been practised for long, hence the specialists in it have acquired great adroitness in its preparation.

When Alexander II. was still heir apparent, and commanded, as is usual, the Preobrazhensky Regiment, he once paid an after-dinner visit to the regiment, which was in camp at the time.

As soon as his calash came in sight, the soldiers, who were only in their shirts at the time, ran out to welcome their "august commander," as the phrase is, with such enthusiasm, that they all followed the carriage, and many, while running, made the sign of the cross, gazing upon the prince. All who witnessed this reception were deeply moved by this simple attachment of the Russian soldier to the Tsar and his son, and by the genuinely religious, and evidently spontaneous, enthusiasm expressed in their faces, movements, and especially by the signing of the cross.

And yet all this had been artificially prepared in the following manner: —

After a review on the previous day the prince told the commander of the brigade that he would revisit the regiment on the following day.

"When are we to expect your imperial highness?"

"Probably in the evening, only, pray, do not expect me: and let there be no preparation."

As soon as the prince was gone, the commander of the brigade called all the captains of companies together, and gave orders that on the following day all the men should have clean shirts, and the moment the prince's carriage should come in sight (special signalmen were to be sent out to give warning of it) every one should run to meet it, and with shouts of "Hurrah!" run after it, and, moreover, that every tenth man in each company should cross himself whilst running. The color-sergeants drew up the companies, and told off every tenth man to cross himself. "One, two, three, ... eight, nine, ten. Sidorenko, you are to cross yourself. One, two, three, ... Ivanof, to cross yourself."

Thus, what was ordered was accomplished, and an impression of spontaneous enthusiasm was produced upon the prince and upon all who saw it, even upon the soldiers and officers, and even upon the commander of the brigade himself.

The same thing is done, though less peremptorily, wherever patriotic manifestations take place. Thus the Franco-Russian festivities, which strike us as the spontaneous outcome of the nation's feelings, did not happen of their own accord, but were very cleverly prepared and arranged for by the foresight of the French government.

As soon as the advent of the Russian fleet was settled, "at once," I again quote from that official organ, the *Village Messenger*, "not only in large towns upon the somewhat lengthy route from Toulon to Paris, but in many places far removed from it, the organization of festivities was commenced by special committees.

"Contributions were everywhere received to defray the expenses of the welcome. Many towns sent deputations to our ambassador in Paris, praying that our

sailors should be permitted to visit them even for a day or an hour.

"The municipalities of all those towns which our sailors were directed to visit voted vast sums of money — more than a hundred thousand rubles — to promote various festivities and merrymakings, and expressed their readiness to devote even a larger sum to the purpose, if necessary, to make the welcome as magnificent as possible.

"In Paris itself, in addition to the sum voted by the town municipality, a large amount was collected in voluntary contributions by a private committee for the series of entertainments, and the French government decreed over a hundred thousand rubles for the reception of the Russian visitors by the ministers and other authorities. In many places which our sailors were unable to visit it was decided to keep October 13 as a festal day in honor of Russia. A number of towns and departments decided to send to Toulon and Paris special deputies to welcome the Russian visitors, to give them presents in memory of France, or to send them addresses and telegrams of welcome.

"It was decided everywhere to regard October 13 as a national feast-day, and to give a day's holiday to all the school children, and in Paris two days.

"Soldiers undergoing certain sentences were pardoned, in order that they might remember with thankfulness the joyous October 13 in the annals of France.

"To enable the public who wished to visit Toulon to participate in the reception of the Russian squadron, the railways reduced their fares to one-half, and arranged for special trains."

And thus when, by a series of measures undertaken everywhere and at the same time, — always thanks to the power in its hands at the command of the government, — a certain portion of people, chiefly the froth, the town crowds, is brought into an unnaturally excited state, it is said: Look at this spontaneous action of the will of the whole nation!

Such manifestations as those of Toulon and Paris, as

those which take place in Germany at the receptions of the emperor or of Bismarck, or at the manœuvers in Lothringen, as those which are always repeated in Russia at all pompously arranged receptions, only prove that the means of exciting a nation artificially which are at present in the hands of the governments and ruling classes, can always evoke any patriotic manifestation they choose, and afterward label it as the outcome of the patriotic sentiments of the people.

Nothing, on the contrary, proves so clearly the absence of patriotism in the people, as these same excessive measures now used for its artificial excitement and the small results attained with so much effort.

If patriotic sentiments are so natural to a people, why then is it not allowed to express itself of its own accord, instead of being stirred up by every ordinary and extraordinary means?

If only the attempt were made for a time in Russia to abolish at the coronation of the Tsar the taking of the oath of allegiance by the people, the solemn repetition of the prayers for the Tsar during every church service; to forgo the festivals of his birth and saints' days, with illuminations, the pealing of bells, and compulsory idleness, to cease the public exhibition of his portrait, and in prayer-books, calendars, and books of study to print no more the family names of himself and of his family, and of even the pronouns alluding to them, in large letters; to cease to honor him by special books and papers published for that purpose; to put an end to imprisonment for the least word of disrespect concerning him, — let us see these things altered for a time, and then we could know how far it is inherent in the people, in the genuine working-class. Prokophy and Ivan the village elder, as they are always assured, and as every foreigner is assured, idolize the Tsar, who one way or another betrays them into the hands of landowners and of the rich in general.

So it is in Russia. But if only in like manner the ruling classes in Germany, France, Italy, England, and America were to do what they so persistently accom-

plish in the inculcation of patriotism, attachment, and obedience to the existing government, we should be able to see how far this supposed patriotism is natural to the nations of our time.

From infancy, by every possible means, — class-books, church-services, sermons, speeches, books, papers, songs, poetry, monuments, — the people is stupefied in one direction; and then either by force or by bribe, several thousands of the people are assembled, and when these, joined by the idlers always present at every sight, to the sound of cannon and music, and inflamed by the glitter and brilliance about them, will commence to shout out what others are shouting in front of them, we are told that this is the expression of the sentiment of the entire nation.

But, in the first place, these thousands, or even tens of thousands, who shout something or other on these occasions, are only a mere ten-thousandth part of the whole nation; and, in the second, of these ten thousand men who shout and wave their hats, the greater part, if not collected by the authorities, as in Russia, is artificially attracted by some kind of bait; and in the third place, of all these thousands there are scarcely a hundred who know the real meaning of what is taking place, and the majority would shout and wave their hats in just the same way for an exactly opposite intention; and in the fourth place, the police is present with power to quiet and silence at once any who might attempt to shout in a fashion not desired or demanded by government, as was energetically done during the Franco-Russian festivities.

In France, war with Russia was welcomed with just the same zest in the reign of Napoleon I., then the war against Alexander I., then that of the allied forces under Napoleon III.; the Bourbons have been welcomed in the same fashion as the House of Orléans, the Republic, Napoleon III., and Boulanger. And in Russia the same welcome has been accorded to Peter, Catherine, Paul, Alexander, Constantine, Nicolas, the Duke of Lichtenberg, the "brotherly Slavonians," the King of Prussia,

the French sailors, and any others the authorities desired to welcome. And just the same thing has taken place in England, America, Germany, and Italy.

What is called patriotism in our time is, on the one hand, only a certain disposition of mind, constantly produced and sustained in the minds of the people in a direction desired by the existing government, by schools, religion, and a subsidized press; and on the other hand it is a temporary excitement of the lowest stratum, morally and intellectually, of the people, produced by special means by the ruling classes, and finally acclaimed as the permanent expression of the people's will.

The patriotism of states oppressed by a foreign power presents no exception. It is equally unnatural to the working masses, and artificially induced by the higher classes.

XIII

"But if the common people have no sentiment of patriotism, it is because they have not yet developed this elevated feeling natural to every educated man. If they do not possess this nobility of sentiment, it must be cultivated in them. And this the government does."

So say, generally, the ruling classes, with such assurance that patriotism is a noble feeling, that the simple populace, who are ignorant of it, think themselves, in consequence, at fault, and try to persuade themselves that they really possess it, or at least pretend to have it.

But what is this elevated sentiment which, according to the opinion of the ruling classes, must be educated in the people?

The sentiment, in its simplest definition, is merely the preference for one's own country or nation above the country or nation of any one else; a sentiment perfectly expressed in the German patriotic song, "Deutschland, Deutschland über Alles," in which one need only substitute for the first two words, "Russland," "Frankreich,"

"Italien," or the name of any other country, to obtain a formula of the elevated sentiment of patriotism for that country.

It is quite possible that governments regard this sentiment as both useful and desirable, and of service to the unity of the State; but one must see that this sentiment is by no means elevated, but, on the contrary, very stupid and immoral. Stupid, because if every country were to consider itself superior to others, it is evident that all but one would be in error; and immoral because it leads all who possess it to aim at benefiting their own country or nation at the expense of every other — an inclination exactly at variance with the fundamental moral law, which all admit, "Do not unto others as you would not wish them to do unto you."

Patriotism may have been a virtue in the ancient world when it compelled men to serve the highest idea of those days, — the fatherland. But how can patriotism be a virtue in these days when it requires of men an ideal exactly opposite to that of our religion and morality, — an admission, not of the equality and fraternity of all men, but of the dominance of one country or nation over all others? But not only is this sentiment no virtue in our times, but it is indubitably a vice; for this sentiment of patriotism cannot now exist, because there is neither material nor moral foundation for its conception.

Patriotism might have had some meaning in the ancient world, when every nation was more or less uniform in composition, professing one national faith, and subject to the unrestrained authority of its great and adored sovereign, representing, as it were, an island, in an ocean of barbarians who sought to overflow it.

It is conceivable that in such circumstances patriotism — the desire of protection from barbarian assault, ready not only to destroy the social order, but threatening it with plunder, slaughter, captivity, slavery, and the violation of its women — was a natural feeling; and it is conceivable that men, in order to defend themselves

and their fellow-countrymen, might prefer their own nation to any other, and cherish a feeling of hatred toward the surrounding barbarians, and destroy them for self-protection.

But what significance can this feeling have in these Christian days?

On what grounds and for what reason can a man of our time follow this example — a Russian, for instance, kill Frenchmen; or a Frenchman, Germans — when he is well aware, however uneducated he may be, that the men of the country or nation against whom his patriotic animosity is excited are no barbarians, but men, Christians like himself, often of the same faith as himself, and, like him, desirous of peace and the peaceful interchange of labor; and besides, bound to him, for the most part, either by the interest of a common effort, or by mercantile or spiritual endeavors, or even by both? So that very often people of one country are nearer and more needful to their neighbors than are these latter to one another, as in the case of laborers in the service of foreign employers of labor, of commercial houses, scientists, and the followers of art.

Moreover, the very conditions of life are now so changed, that what we call fatherland, what we are asked to distinguish from everything else, has ceased to be clearly defined, as it was with the ancients, when men of the same country were of one nationality, one state, and one religion.

The patriotism of an Egyptian, a Jew, a Greek is comprehensible, for in defending his country he defended his religion, his nationality, his fatherland, and his state.

But in what terms can one express to-day the patriotism of an Irishman in the United States, who by his religion belongs to Rome, by his nationality to Ireland, by his citizenship to the United States? In the same position is a Bohemian in Austria, a Pole in Russia, Prussia, or Austria; a Hindu in England; a Tartar or Armenian in Russia or Turkey. Not to mention the people of these particular conquered nations, the people of the most homogeneous countries, Russia, France,

Prussia, can no longer possess the sentiment of patriotism which was natural to the ancients, because very often the chief interests of their lives — of the family, for instance, where a man is married to a woman of another nationality; commercial, where his capital is invested abroad; spiritual, scientific, or artistic — are no longer contained within the limits of his country, but outside it, in the very state, perhaps, against which his patriotic animosity is being excited.

But patriotism is chiefly impossible to-day because, however much we may have endeavored during eighteen hundred years to conceal the meaning of Christianity, it has nevertheless leaked into our lives, and controls them to such an extent that the dullest and most unrefined of men must see to-day the complete incompatibility of patriotism with the moral law by which we live.

XIV

Patriotism was a necessity in the formation and consolidation of powerful states composed of different nationalities and acting in mutual defense against barbarians. But as soon as Christian enlightenment transformed these states from within, giving to all an equal standing, patriotism became not only needless, but the sole impediment to a union between nations for which, by reason of their Christian consciousness, they were prepared.

Patriotism to-day is the cruel tradition of an outlived period, which exists not merely by its inertia, but because the governments and ruling classes, aware that not their power only, but their very existence, depends upon it, persistently excite and maintain it among the people, both by cunning and violence.

Patriotism to-day is like a scaffolding which was needful once to raise the walls of the building, but which, though it presents the only obstacle to the house being inhabited, is none the less retained, because its existence is of profit to certain persons.

For a long while there has not been and cannot be any reason for dissension between Christian nations. It is even impossible to imagine, how and for what, Russian and German workmen, peacefully and conjointly working on the frontiers or in the capitals, should quarrel. And much less easily can one imagine animosity between some Kazan peasant who supplies Germans with wheat, and a German who supplies him with scythes and machines.

It is the same between French, German, and Italian workmen. And it would be even ridiculous to speak of the possibility of a quarrel between men of science, art, and letters of different nationalities, who have the same objects of common interest independent of nationalities or of governments.

But the various governments cannot leave the nations in peace, because the chief, if not the sole, justification for the existence of governments is the pacification of nations, and the settlement of their hostile relationships. Hence governments evoke such hostile relationships under the aspect of patriotism, in order to exhibit their powers of pacification. Somewhat like a gipsy who, having put some pepper under a horse's tail, and beaten it in its stall, brings it out, and hanging on to the reins, pretends that he can hardly control the excited animal.

We are told that governments are very careful to maintain peace between nations. But how do they maintain it? People live on the Rhine in peaceful communication with one another. Suddenly, owing to certain quarrels and intrigues between kings and emperors, a war commences; and we learn that the French government has considered it necessary to regard this peaceful people as Frenchmen. Centuries pass, the population has become accustomed to their position, when animosity again begins amongst the governments of the great nations, and a war is started upon the most empty pretext, because the German government considers it necessary to regard this population as Germans: and between all Frenchmen and Germans is kindled a mutual feeling of ill-will.

Or else Germans and Russians live in friendly fashion on their frontiers, pacifically exchanging the results of their labor; when all of a sudden those same institutions, which only exist to maintain the peace of nations, begin to quarrel, are guilty of one stupidity after another, and finally are unable to invent anything better than a most childish method of self-punishment in order to have their own way, and do a bad turn to their opponent, — which in this case is especially easy, as those who arrange a war of tariffs are not the sufferers from it; it is others who suffer, — and so arrange such a war of tariffs as took place not long ago between Russia and Germany. And so between Russians and Germans a feeling of animosity is fostered, which is still more inflamed by the Franco-Russian festivities, and may lead at one moment or another to a bloody war.

I have mentioned these last two examples of the influence of a government over the people used to excite their animosity against another people, because they have occurred in our times: but in all history there is no war which was not hatched by the governments, the governments alone, independent of the interests of the people, to whom war is always pernicious even when successful.

The government assures the people that they are in danger from the invasion of another nation, or from foes in their midst, and that the only way to escape this danger is by the slavish obedience of the people to their government. This fact is seen most prominently during revolutions and dictatorships, but it exists always and everywhere that the power of the government exists. Every government explains its existence, and justifies its deeds of violence, by the argument that if it did not exist the condition of things would be very much worse. After assuring the people of its danger the government subordinates it to control, and when in this condition compels it to attack some other nation. And thus the assurance of the government is corroborated in the eyes of the people, as to the danger of attack from other nations.

"*Divide et impera.*"

Patriotism in its simplest, clearest, and most indubi-

table signification is nothing else but a means of obtaining for the rulers their ambitions and covetous desires, and for the ruled the abdication of human dignity, reason, and conscience, and a slavish enthralment to those in power. And as such it is recommended wherever it is preached.

Patriotism is slavery.

Those who preach peace by arbitration argue thus: Two animals cannot divide their prey otherwise than by fighting; as also is the case with children, savages, and savage nations. But reasonable people settle their differences by argument, persuasion, and by referring the decision of the question to other impartial and reasonable persons. So the nations should act to-day. This argument seems quite correct. The nations of our time have reached the period of reasonableness, have no animosity toward one another, and might decide their differences in a peaceful fashion. But this argument applies only so far as it has reference to the people, and only to the people who are not under the control of a government. But the people that subordinate themselves to a government cannot be reasonable, because the subordination is in itself a sign of a want of reason.

How can we speak of the reasonableness of men who promise in advance to accomplish everything, including murder, that the government — that is, certain men who have attained a certain position — may command? Men who can accept such obligations, and resignedly subordinate themselves to anything that may be prescribed by persons unknown to them in Petersburg, Vienna, Berlin, Paris, cannot be considered reasonable; and the governments, that is, those who are in possession of such power, can still less be considered reasonable, and cannot but misuse it, and become dazed by such insane and dreadful power.

This is why peace between nations cannot be attained by reasonable means, by conventions, by arbitration, as long as the subordination of the people to the government continues, a condition always unreasonable and always pernicious.

But the subordination of people to governments will exist as long as patriotism exists, because all governmental authority is founded upon patriotism, that is, upon the readiness of people to subordinate themselves to authority in order to defend their nation, country, or state from dangers which are supposed to threaten.

The power of the French kings over their people before the Revolution was founded on patriotism; upon it too was based the power of the Committee of Public Welfare after the Revolution; upon it was erected the power of Napoleon, both as consul and as emperor; upon it, after the downfall of Napoleon, was based the power of the Bourbons, then that of the Republic, Louis Philippe, and again of the Republic; then of Napoleon III., and again of the Republic, and upon it finally rested the power of M. Boulanger.

It is dreadful to say so, but there is not, nor has there been, any conjoint violence of one people against another which was not accomplished in the name of patriotism. In its name the Russians fought the French, and the French the Russians; in its name Russians and French are preparing to fight the Germans, and the Germans to wage war on two frontiers. And such is the case not only with wars. In the name of patriotism the Russians stifle the Poles, the Germans persecute the Slavonians, the men of the Commune killed those of Versailles, and those of Versailles the men of the Commune.

XV

It would seem that, owing to the spread of education, of speedier locomotion, of greater intercourse between different nations, to the widening of literature, and chiefly to the decrease of danger from other nations, the fraud of patriotism ought daily to become more difficult and at length impossible to practise.

But the truth is that these very means of general external education, facilitated locomotion and intercourse, and especially the spread of literature, being captured

and constantly more and more controlled by government, confer on the latter such possibilities of exciting a feeling of mutual animosity between nations, that in degree as the uselessness and harmfulness of patriotism have become manifest, so also has increased the power of the government and ruling class to excite patriotism among the people.

The difference between that which was and that which is consists solely in the fact that now a much larger number of men participate in the advantages which patriotism confers on the upper classes, hence a much larger number of men are employed in spreading and sustaining this astounding superstition.

The more difficult the government finds it to retain its power, the more numerous are the men who share it.

In former times a small band of rulers held the reins of power, emperors, kings, dukes, their soldiers and assistants; whereas now the power and its profits are shared not only by government officials and by the clergy, but by capitalists — great and small, landowners, bankers, members of Parliament, professors, village officials, men of science, and even artists, but particularly by authors and journalists.

And all these people, consciously or unconsciously, spread the deceit of patriotism, which is indispensable to them if the profits of their position are to be preserved.

And the fraud, thanks to the means for its propagation, and to the participation in it of a much larger number of people, having become more powerful, is continued so successfully, that, notwithstanding the increased difficulty of deceiving, the extent to which the people are deceived is the same as ever.

A hundred years ago the uneducated classes, who had no idea of what composed their government, or by what nations they were surrounded, blindly obeyed the local government officials and nobles by whom they were enslaved, and it was sufficient for the government, by bribes and rewards, to remain on good terms

with these nobles and officials, in order to squeeze from the people all that was required.

Whereas now, when the people can, for the most part, read, know more or less of what their government consists, and what nations surround them; when working-men constantly and easily move from place to place, bringing back information of what is happening in the world, — the simple demand that the orders of the government must be accomplished is not sufficient; it is needful as well to cloud those true ideas about life which the people have, and to inculcate unnatural ideas as to the condition of their existence, and the relationship to it of other nations.

And so, thanks to the development of literature, reading, and the facilities of travel, governments which have their agents everywhere, by means of statutes, sermons, schools, and the press, inculcate everywhere upon the people the most barbarous and erroneous ideas as to their advantages, the relationship of nations, their qualities and intentions; and the people, so crushed by labor that they have neither the time nor the power to understand the significance or test the truth of the ideas which are forced upon them or of the demands made upon them in the name of their welfare, put themselves unmurmuringly under the yoke.

Whereas working-men who have freed themselves from unremitting labor and become educated, and who have, therefore, it might be supposed, the power of seeing through the fraud which is practised upon them, are subjected to such a coercion of threats, bribes, and all the hypnotic influence of governments, that, almost without exception, they desert to the side of the government, and by entering some well-paid and profitable employment, as priest, schoolmaster, officer, or functionary, become participators in spreading the deceit which is destroying their comrades.

It is as if nets were laid at the entrances to education, in which those who by some means or other escape from the masses bowed down by labor, are inevitably caught.

At first, when one understands the cruelty of all this deceit, one feels indignant in spite of oneself against those who from personal ambition or greedy advantage propagate this cruel fraud which destroys the souls as well as the bodies of men, and one feels inclined to accuse them of a sly craftiness; but the fact is that they are deceitful with no wish to deceive, but because they cannot be otherwise. And they deceive, not like Machiavellians, but with no consciousness of their deceit, and usually with the naïve assurance that they are doing something excellent and elevated, a view in which they are persistently encouraged by the sympathy and approval of all who surround them.

It is true that, being dimly aware that on this fraud is founded their power and advantageous position, they are unconsciously drawn toward it; but their action is not based on any desire to delude the people, but because they believe it to be of service to the people.

Thus emperors, kings, and their ministers, with all their coronations, manœuvers, reviews, visiting one another, dressing up in various uniforms, going from place to place, and deliberating with serious faces as to how they may keep peace between nations supposed to be inimical to each other, — nations who would never dream of quarreling, — feel quite sure that what they are doing is very reasonable and useful.

In the same way the various ministers, diplomatists, and functionaries — dressed up in uniforms, with all sorts of ribbons and crosses, writing and docketing with great care, upon the best paper, their hazy, involved, altogether needless communications, advices, projects — are quite assured that, without their activity, the entire existence of nations would halt or become deranged.

In the same manner military men, got up in ridiculous costumes, arguing seriously with what rifle or cannon men can be most expeditiously destroyed, are quite certain that their field-days and reviews are most important and essential to the people.

So likewise the priests, journalists, writers of patriotic songs and class-books, who preach patriotism and receive liberal remuneration, are equally satisfied.

And no doubt the organizers of festivities — like the Franco-Russian fêtes — are sincerely affected while pronouncing their patriotic speeches and toasts.

All these people do what they are doing unconsciously, because they must, all their life being founded upon deceit, and because they know not how to do anything else; and coincidently these same acts call forth the sympathy and approbation of all the people amongst whom they are done. Moreover, being all linked together, they approve and justify one another's acts — emperors and kings those of the soldiers, functionaries, and clergymen; and soldiers, functionaries, and clergymen the acts of emperors and kings, while the populace, and especially the town populace, seeing nothing comprehensible in what is done by all these men, unwittingly ascribe to them a special, almost a supernatural, significance.

The people see, for instance, that a triumphal arch is erected; that men bedeck themselves with crowns, uniforms, robes; that fireworks are let off, cannons fired, bells rung, regiments paraded with their bands; that papers and telegrams and messengers fly from place to place, and that strangely arrayed men are busily engaged in hurrying from place to place and much is said and written; and the throng being unable to believe that all this is done (as is indeed the case) without the slightest necessity, attribute to it all a special mysterious significance, and gaze with shouts and hilarity or with silent awe. And on the other hand, this hilarity or silent awe confirms the assurance of those people who are responsible for all these foolish deeds.

Thus, for instance, not long ago, Wilhelm II. ordered a new throne for himself, with some special kind of ornamentation, and having dressed up in a white uniform, with a cuirass, tight breeches, and a helmet with a bird on the top, and enveloped himself in a red mantle, came out to his subjects, and sat down on this new throne,

perfectly assured that his act was most necessary and important; and his subjects not only saw nothing ridiculous in it, but thought the sight most imposing.

XVI

For some time the power of the government over the people has not been maintained by force, as was the case when one nation conquered another and ruled it by force of arms, or when the rulers of an unarmed people had separate legions of janizaries or guards.

The power of the government has for some time been maintained by what is termed public opinion.

A public opinion exists that patriotism is a fine moral sentiment, and that it is right and our duty to regard one's own nation, one's own state, as the best in the world; and flowing naturally from this public opinion is another, namely, that it is right and our duty to acquiesce in the control of a government over ourselves, to subordinate ourselves to it, to serve in the army and submit ourselves to discipline, to give our earnings to the government in the form of taxes, to submit to the decisions of the law-courts, and to consider the edicts of the government as divinely right. And when such public opinion exists, a strong governmental power is formed possessing milliards of money, an organized mechanism of administration, the postal service, telegraphs, telephones, disciplined armies, law-courts, police, submissive clergy, schools, even the press; and this power maintains in the people the public opinion which it finds necessary.

The power of the government is maintained by public opinion, and with this power the government, by means of its organs, — its officials, law-courts, schools, churches, even the press, — can always maintain the public opinion which they need. Public opinion produces the power, and the power produces public opinion. And there appears to be no escape from this position.

Nor indeed would there be, if public opinion were

something fixed, unchangeable, and governments were able to manufacture the public opinion they needed.

But, fortunately, such is not the case; and public opinion is not, to begin with, permanent, unchangeable, stationary; but, on the contrary, is constantly changing, moving with the advance of humanity; and public opinion not only cannot be produced at will by a government, but is that which produces governments and gives them power, or deprives them of it.

It may seem that public opinion is at present stationary, and the same to-day as it was ten years ago; that in relation to certain questions it merely fluctuates, but returns again — as when it replaces a monarchy with a republic, and then the republic with a monarchy; but it has only that appearance when we examine merely the external manifestation or public opinion which is produced artificially by the government.

But we need only take public opinion in its relation to the life of mankind to see that, as with the day or the year, it is never stagnant, but always proceeds along the way by which all humanity advances, as, notwithstanding delays and hesitations, the day or the spring advances by the same path as the sun.

So that, although, judging from external appearances, the position of European nations to-day is almost as it was fifty years ago, the relationship of the nations to these appearances is quite different from what it was then.

Though now, the same as then, exist rulers, troops, taxes, luxury and poverty, Catholicism, orthodoxy, Lutheranism, in former times these existed because public opinion demanded them, whereas now they exist only because the governments artificially maintain what was once a vital public opinion.

If we as seldom remark this movement of public opinion as we notice the movement of water in a river when we ourselves are descending with the current, this is because the imperceptible changes in public opinion influence ourselves as well.

The nature of public opinion is a constant and irresist-

ible movement. If it appears to us to be stationary it is because there are always some who have utilized a certain phase of public opinion for their own profit, and who, in consequence, use every effort to give it an appearance of permanence, and to conceal the manifestations of real opinion, which is already alive, though not yet perfectly expressed, in the consciousness of men. And such people, who adhere to the outworn opinion and conceal the new one, are at the present time those who compose governments and ruling classes, and who preach patriotism as an indispensable condition of human life.

The means which these people can control are immense; but as public opinion is constantly pouring in upon them their efforts must in the end be in vain: the old falls into decrepitude, the new grows.

The longer the manifestation of nascent public opinion is restrained, the more it accumulates, the more energetically will it burst forth.

Governments and ruling classes try with all their strength to conserve that old public opinion of patriotism upon which their power rests, and to smother the expression of the new, which would destroy it.

But to preserve the old and to check the new is possible only up to a certain point; just as, only to a certain extent, is it possible to check running water with a dam.

However much governments may try to arouse in the people a public opinion, of the past, unnatural to them, as to the merit and virtue of patriotism, those of our day believe in patriotism no longer, but espouse more and more the solidarity and brotherhood of nations.

Patriotism promises men nothing but a terrible future, but the brotherhood of nations represents an ideal which is becoming ever more intelligible and more desirable to humanity. Hence the progress of mankind from the old outworn opinion to the new must inevitably take place. This progression is as inevitable as the falling in the spring of the last dry leaves and the appearance of the new from swollen buds.

And the longer this transition is delayed, the more

inevitable it becomes, and the more evident its necessity.

And indeed, one has only to remember what we profess, both as Christians and merely as men of our day, those fundamental moralities by which we are directed in our social, family, and personal existence, and the position in which we place ourselves in the name of patriotism, in order to see what a degree of contradiction we have placed between our conscience and what, thanks to an energetic government influence in this direction, we regard as our public opinion.

One has only thoughtfully to examine the most ordinary demands of patriotism, which are expected of us as the most simple and natural affair, in order to understand to what extent these requirements are at variance with that real public opinion which we already share. We all regard ourselves as free, educated, humane men, or even as Christians, and yet we are all in such a position that were Wilhelm to-morrow to take offense against Alexander, or Mr. N. to write a lively article on the Eastern Question, or Prince So-and-so to plunder some Bulgarians or Servians, or some queen or empress to be put out by something or other, all we educated humane Christians must go and kill people of whom we have no knowledge, and toward whom we are as amicably disposed as to the rest of the world.

And if such an event has not come to pass, it is owing, we are assured, to the love of peace which controls Alexander, or because Nikolaï Alexandrovitch has married the granddaughter of Victoria.

But if another happened to be in the room of Alexander, or if the disposition of Alexander himself were to alter, or if Nicholas the son of Alexander had married Amalia instead of Alice, we should rush at each other like wild beasts, and rip up each other's bellies.

Such is the supposed public opinion of our time, and such arguments are coolly repeated in every liberal and advanced organ of the press.

If we, Christians of a thousand years' standing, have

not already cut one another's throats, it is merely because Alexander III. does not permit us to do so.

But this is awful!

XVII

No feats of heroism are needed to achieve the greatest and most important changes in the existence of humanity; neither the armament of millions of soldiers, nor the construction of new roads and machines, nor the arrangement of exhibitions, nor the organization of workmen's unions, nor revolutions, nor barricades, nor explosions, nor the perfection of aërial navigation; but a change in public opinion.

And to accomplish this change no exertions of the mind are needed, nor the refutation of anything in existence, nor the invention of any extraordinary novelty; it is only needful that we should not succumb to the erroneous, already defunct, public opinion of the past, which governments have induced artificially; it is only needful that each individual should say what he really feels or thinks, or at least that he should not say what he does not think.

And if only a small body of the people were to do so at once, of their own accord, outworn public opinion would fall off us of itself, and a new, living, real opinion would assert itself. And when public opinion should thus have changed without the slightest effort, the internal condition of men's lives which so torments them would change likewise of its own accord.

One is ashamed to say how little is needed for all men to be delivered from those calamities which now oppress them; it is only needful not to lie.

Let people only be superior to the falsehood which is instilled into them, let them decline to say what they neither feel nor think, and at once such a revolution of all the organization of our life will take place as could not be attained by all the efforts of revolu-

tionists during centuries, even were complete power within their hands.

If people would only believe that strength is not in force but in truth, would only not shrink from it either in word or deed, not say what they do not think, not do what they regard as foolish and as wrong!

"But what is there so gravely serious in shouting Vive la France! or, Hurrah for some emperor, king, or conqueror; in putting on a uniform and a court decoration and going and waiting in the anteroom and bowing low and calling men by strange titles and then giving the young and uncultured to understand that all this sort of thing is very praiseworthy?" Or, "Why is the writing of an article in defence of the Franco-Russian alliance, or of the war of tariffs, or in condemnation of Germans, Russians, or Englishmen, of such moment?" Or, "What harm is there in attendance at some patriotic festivity, or in drinking the health and making a speech in favor of people whom one does not love, and with whom one has no business?" Or, "What is of such importance in admitting the use and excellence of treaties and alliances, or in keeping silence when one's own nation is lauded in one's hearing, and other nations are abused and maligned; or when Catholicism, Orthodoxy, and Lutheranism are lauded; or some hero of war, as Napoleon, Peter, Boulanger, or Skobelef, is admired?"

All these things seem so unimportant. Yet in these ways which seem unimportant to us, in our refraining from them, in our proving, as far as we can, the unreasonableness that is apparent to us, in this is our chief, our irresistible might, of which that unconquerable force is composed which constitutes real genuine public opinion, that opinion which, while itself advancing, moves all humanity.

The governments know this, and tremble before this force, and strive in every way they can to counteract or become possessed of it.

They know that strength is not in force, but in thought and in clear expression of it, and, therefore, they are more afraid of the expression of independent

thought than of armies; hence they institute censorships, bribe the press, and monopolize the control of religion and of the schools. But the spiritual force which moves the world eludes them; it is neither in books nor in papers; it cannot be trapped, and is always free; it is in the depths of consciousness of mankind. The most powerful and untrammeled force of freedom is that which asserts itself in the soul of man when he is alone, and in the sole presence of himself reflects on the facts of the universe, and then naturally communicates his thoughts to wife, brother, friend, with all those with whom he comes in contact, and from whom he would regard it as sinful to conceal the truth.

No milliards of rubles, no millions of troops, no organization, no wars or revolutions will produce what the simple expression of a free man may, on what he regards as just, independently of what exists or was instilled into him.

One free man will say with truth what he thinks and feels amongst thousands of men who by their acts and words attest exactly the opposite. It would seem that he who sincerely expressed his thought must remain alone, whereas it generally happens that every one else, or the majority at least, have been thinking and feeling the same things but without expressing them.

And that which yesterday was the novel opinion of one man, to-day becomes the general opinion of the majority.

And as soon as this opinion is established, immediately by imperceptible degrees, but beyond power of frustration, the conduct of mankind begins to alter.

Whereas at present, every man, even, if free, asks himself, "What can I do alone against all this ocean of evil and deceit which overwhelms us? Why should I express my opinion? Why indeed possess one? It is better not to reflect on these misty and involved questions. Perhaps these contradictions are an inevitable condition of our existence. And why should I struggle alone with all the evil in the world? Is it not

better to go with the stream which carries me along? If anything can be done, it must be done not alone but in company with others."

And leaving the most powerful of weapons — thought and its expression — which move the world, each man employs the weapon of social activity, not noticing that every social activity is based on the very foundations against which he is bound to fight, and that upon entering the social activity which exists in our world every man is obliged, if only in part, to deviate from the truth and to make concessions which destroy the force of the powerful weapon which should assist him in the struggle. It is as if a man, who was given a blade so marvelously keen that it would sever anything, should use its edge for driving in nails.

We all complain of the senseless order of life, which is at variance with our being, and yet we refuse to use the unique and powerful weapon within our hands — the consciousness of truth and its expression; but on the contrary, under the pretext of struggling with evil, we destroy the weapon, and sacrifice it to the exigencies of an imaginary conflict.

One man does not assert the truth which he knows, because he feels himself bound to the people with whom he is engaged; another, because the truth might deprive him of the profitable position by which he maintains his family; a third, because he desires to attain reputation and authority, and then use them in the service of mankind; a fourth, because he does not wish to destroy old sacred traditions; a fifth, because he has no desire to offend people; a sixth, because the expression of the truth would arouse persecution, and disturb the excellent social activity to which he has devoted himself.

One serves as emperor, king, minister, government functionary, or soldier, and assures himself and others that the deviation from truth indispensable to his condition is redeemed by the good he does. Another, who fulfils the duties of a spiritual pastor, does not in the depths of his soul believe all he teaches, but permits the devia-

tion from truth in view of the good he does. A third instructs men by means of literature, and notwithstanding the silence he must observe with regard to the whole truth, in order not to stir up the government and society against himself, has no doubt as to the good he does. A fourth struggles resolutely with the existing order as revolutionist or anarchist, and is quite assured that the aims he pursues are so beneficial that the neglect of the truth, or even of the falsehood, by silence, indispensable to the success of his activity, does not destroy the utility of his work.

In order that the conditions of a life contrary to the consciousness of humanity should change and be replaced by one which is in accord with it, the outworn public opinion must be superseded by a new and living one.

And in order that the old outworn opinion should yield its place to the new living one, all who are conscious of the new requirements of existence should openly express them. And yet all those who are conscious of these new requirements, one in the name of one thing, and one in the name of another, not only pass them over in silence, but both by word and deed attest their exact opposites.

Only the truth and its expression can establish that new public opinion which will reform the ancient obsolete and pernicious order of life; and yet we not only do not express the truth we know, but often even distinctly give expression to what we ourselves regard as false.

If only free men would not rely on that which has no power, and is always fettered — upon external aids; but would trust in that which is always powerful and free — the truth and its expression!

If only men were boldly and clearly to express the truth already manifest to them of the brotherhood of all nations, and the crime of exclusive devotion to one's own people, that defunct, false public opinion would slough off of itself like a dried skin, — and upon it depends the power of governments, and all the evil pro-

duced by them; and the new public opinion would stand forth, which is even now but awaiting that dropping off of the old to put forth manifestly and powerfully its demand, and establish new forms of existence in conformity with the consciousness of mankind.

XVIII

It is sufficient that people should understand that what is enunciated to them as public opinion, and maintained by such complex, energetic, and artificial means, is not public opinion, but only the lifeless outcome of what was once public opinion; and, what is more important, it is sufficient that they should have faith in themselves, that they should believe that what they are conscious of in the depths of their souls, what in every one is pressing for expression, and is only not expressed because it contradicts the public opinion supposed to exist, is the power which transforms the world, and to express which is the mission of mankind: it is sufficient to believe that truth is not what men talk of, but what is told by his own conscience, that is, by God, — and at once the whole artificially maintained public opinion will disappear, and a new and true one be established in its place.

If people would only speak what they think, and not what they do not think, all the superstitions emanating from patriotism would at once drop away with the cruel feelings and violence founded upon it. The hatred and animosity between nations and peoples, fanned by their governments, would cease; the extolling of military heroism, that is of murder, would be at an end; and, what is of most importance, respect for authorities, abandonment to them of the fruits of one's labor, and subordination to them, would cease, since there is no other reason for them but patriotism.

And if merely this were to take place, that vast mass of feeble people who are controlled by externals would

sway at once to the side of the new public opinion, which should reign henceforth in place of the old.

Let the government keep the schools, Church, press, its milliards of money and millions of armed men transformed into machines: all this apparently terrible organization of brute force is as nothing compared to the consciousness of truth, which surges in the soul of one man who knows the power of truth, which is communicated from him to a second and a third, as one candle lights an innumerable quantity of others.

The light needs only to be kindled, and, like wax in the face of fire, this organization, which seems so powerful, will melt, and be consumed.

Only let men understand the vast power which is given them in the word which expresses truth; only let them refuse to sell their birthright for a mess of pottage; only let people use their power, — and their rulers will not dare, as now, to threaten men with universal slaughter, to which, at their discretion, they may or may not subject them, nor dare before the eyes of a peaceful populace to hold reviews and manœuvers of disciplined murderers; nor would the governments dare for their own profit and the advantage of their assistants to arrange and derange custom-house agreements, nor to collect from the people those millions of rubles which they distribute among their assistants, and by the help of which their murders are planned.

And such a transformation is not only possible, but it is as impossible that it should not be accomplished as that a lifeless, decaying tree should not fall, and a younger take its place.

"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid," said Christ. And this peace is indeed among us, and depends on us for its attainment.

If only the hearts of individuals would not be troubled by the seductions with which they are hourly seduced, nor afraid of those imaginary terrors by which they are intimidated; if people only knew wherein their chiefest,

all-conquering power consists, — a peace which men have always desired, not the peace attainable by diplomatic negotiations, imperial or kingly progresses, dinners, speeches, fortresses, cannon, dynamite, and melinite, by the exhaustion of the people under taxes, and the abduction from labor of the flower of the population, but the peace attainable by a voluntary profession of the truth by every man, would long ago have been established in our midst.

March 29, 1894.

TWO WARS[1]

CHRISTENDOM has recently been the scene of two wars. One is now concluded, whereas the other still continues; but they were for a time being carried on simultaneously, and the contrast they present is very striking. The first — the Spanish-American war — was an old, vain, foolish, and cruel war, inopportune, out-of-date, barbarous, which sought by killing one set of people to solve the question as to how and by whom another set of people ought to be governed.

The other, which is still going on, and will end only when there is an end of all war, is a new, self-sacrificing, holy war, which was long ago proclaimed (as Victor Hugo expressed it at one of the congresses) by the best and most advanced — Christian — section of mankind against the other, the coarse and savage section. This war has recently been carried on with especial vigor and success by a handful of Christian people — the Dukhobors of the Caucasus — against the powerful Russian government.

The other day I received a letter from a gentleman in Colorado — Jesse Goldwin — who asks me to send him "... a few words or thoughts expressive of my feelings with regard to the noble work of the American nation, and the heroism of its soldiers and sailors." This gentleman, together with an overwhelming majority of the American people, feels perfectly confident that the work of the Americans — the killing of several thousands of almost unarmed men (for, in comparison with the equipment of the Americans, the Spaniards were almost without arms) — was beyond doubt a

[1] From *The Clarion*, November 19, 1898.

"noble work"; and he regards the majority of those who, after killing great numbers of their fellow-creatures, have remained safe and sound, and have secured for themselves an advantageous position, as heroes.

The Spanish-American War — leaving out of account the atrocities committed by the Spaniards in Cuba, which served as a pretext for it — is very like this: An old man, infirm and childish, brought up in the traditions of a false honor, challenges, for the settlement of some misunderstanding, a young man, in full possession of his powers, to a boxing-match. And the young man, who, from his antecedents and professed sentiments, ought to be immeasurably above such a settlement of the question, accepts the challenge. Armed with a club, he then throws himself upon this infirm and childish old man, knocks out his teeth, breaks his ribs, and afterward enthusiastically relates his great deeds to a large audience of young men like himself, who rejoice and praise the hero who has thus maimed the old man.

Such is the nature of the first war, which is occupying the attention of the whole Christian world. Of the other no one speaks; hardly any one knows about it.

This second war may be described as follows: The people of every nation are being deluded by their rulers, who say to them, "You, who are governed by us, are all in danger of being conquered by other nations; we are watching over your welfare and safety, and consequently we demand of you annually some millions of rubles — the fruit of your labor — to be used by us in the acquisition of arms, cannon, powder, and ships for your defence; we also demand that you yourselves shall enter institutions, organized by us, where you will become senseless particles of a huge machine — the army — which will be under our absolute control. On entering this army you will cease to be men with wills of your own; you will simply do what we require of you. But what we wish, above all else, is to exercise dominion; the means by which we dominate is killing, therefore we will instruct you to kill."

Notwithstanding the obvious absurdity of the assertion that people are in danger of being attacked by the governments of other states, who, in their turn, affirm that they — in spite of all their desire for peace — find themselves in precisely the same danger; notwithstanding the humiliation of that slavery to which men subject themselves by entering the army; notwithstanding the cruelty of the work to which they are summoned, — men nevertheless submit to this fraud, give their money to be used for their own subjugation, and themselves help to enslave others.

But now there come people who say: "What you tell us about the danger threatening us, and about your anxiety to guard us against it, is a fraud. All the states are assuring us that they desire peace, and yet at the same time all are arming themselves against the others. Moreover, according to that law, which you yourselves recognize, all men are brothers, and it makes no difference whether one belongs to this state or to that; therefore the idea of our being attacked by other nations, with which you try to frighten us, has no terrors for us; we regard it as a matter of no importance. The essential thing, however, is that the law given to us by God and recognized even by you who are requiring us to participate in killing, distinctly forbids, not killing only, but also every kind of violence. Therefore we cannot, and will not, take part in your preparations for murder, we will give no money for the purpose, and we will not attend the meetings arranged by you with the object of perverting men's minds and consciences, and transforming them into instruments of violence, obedient to any bad man who may choose to make use of them."

This constitutes the second war. It has long been carried on by the best men of the world against the representatives of brute force, and has of late flamed up with special intensity between the Dukhobors and the Russian government. The Russian government has made use of all the weapons it had at command — police measures for making arrests, for prohibiting

people moving from place to place, for forbidding all intercourse with one another, the interception of letters, espionage, the prohibition to publish in the newspapers information about anything concerning the Dukhobors, calumnies of them printed in the papers, bribery, flogging, imprisonment, and the ruin of families.

The Dukhobors have, on their part, employed their one religious weapon, viz., gentle intelligence and patient firmness; and they say: "One must not obey man rather than God. Therefore, whatever you may do to us, we cannot and will not obey you."

Men praise the heroes of the savage Spanish-American war, who, in their desire to distinguish themselves before the world, and to gain reward and fame, have slain great numbers of men, or have died while engaged in killing their fellow-creatures. But no one speaks or even knows about the heroes of the war against war, who — unseen and unheard — have died and are now dying under the rod, in foul prison cells or in painful exile, and who, nevertheless, to their last breath, stand firm by goodness and truth.

I knew dozens of these martyrs who have already died, and hundreds more who, scattered all over the world, are still suffering martyrdom for the truth.

I knew Drozhin, a peasant teacher, who was tortured to death in a penal battalion; I knew another, Izumtchenko (a friend of Drozhin), who, after being kept for some time in a penal battalion, was banished to the other end of the world. I knew Olkhovikof, a peasant who refused military service, and was consequently sent to a penal battalion, and then, while on board a steamer which was transporting him into exile, converted Sereda, the soldier who had him in charge. Sereda, understanding what Olkhovikof said to him as to the sinfulness of military service, went to his superiors and said, like the ancient martyrs; "I do not wish to be among the torturers; let me join the martyrs." And forthwith they began to torture him, sent him to a penal battalion, and afterwards exiled him to the prov-

ince of Yakutsk. I knew dozens of Dukhobors, of whom many have died or become blind, and yet they would not yield to demands which are contrary to the divine law.

The other day I read a letter from a young Dukhobor, who has been sent alone to a regiment stationed in Samarkand. Again, those same demands on the part of the officers, the same persuasion from the chaplain, the same threats and entreaties, and always the same simple and irresistible replies: "I cannot do what is opposed to my belief in God."

"Then we will torture you to death."

"That is your business. You do your work and I will do mine."

And this youth of twenty, forsaken of all, in a strange place, surrounded by men who are hostile to him, amid the rich, the powerful, and the educated, who are concentrating all their energies on the task of bringing him to subjection, does not submit, but still perseveres in his heroic deed.

But men say: "These are useless victims; these people perish, but the order of life will remain the same." This, I believe, is just what was said with regard to the sacrifice of Christ, as well as of all the other martyrs to truth. The men of our time, especially the learned, have grown so coarse that they, owing to their coarseness, are even unable to understand the significance and effect of spiritual force. A shell with 250 puds of dynamite, fired at a crowd of living men —this they understand and recognize as a force; but thought, truth, which has been realized and practised in the life, even to martyrdom, which has now become accessible to millions — this, according to their conception, is not a force, because it makes no noise, and one cannot see broken bones and pools of blood. Learned men (true, it is those whose learning is misdirected) are using all the power of erudition to prove that mankind lives like a herd of cattle, that man is guided by economic considerations alone, and that his intellect is given him merely for amusement. But governments well

know what it is that rules the world, consequently — guided by the instinct of self-preservation — they are undoubtedly chiefly concerned about the manifestation of spiritual forces, upon which forces depend their existence or their ruin.

And this is precisely the reason why all the energies of the Russian government were, and still continue to be, exerted to render the Dukhobors harmless, to isolate them, to banish them beyond the frontier.

Notwithstanding all these efforts, however, the struggle of the Dukhobors has opened the eyes of millions.

I know hundreds of military men, old and young, who, owing to the persecution of the gentle, industrious Dukhobors, have begun to have doubts as to the legality of their occupation. I know people who have, for the first time, begun to meditate on life and the meaning of Christianity only after seeing or hearing about the life of these people, and the persecutions to which they have been subjected.

And the government that is tyrannizing over millions of people knows this, and feels that it has been struck to the very heart.

Such is the nature of the second war which is being waged in our times, and such are its consequences. And not to the Russian government alone are these consequences of importance; every government founded upon violence and upheld by armies is wounded in the same way by this weapon. Christ said, "*I have conquered the world.*" And, indeed, He has conquered the world, if men would but learn to believe in the strength of the weapon given by Him.

And this weapon is the obedience of every man to his own reason and conscience. This, indeed, is so simple, so indubitable, and binding upon every man. "You wish to make me a participator in murder; you demand of me money for the preparation of weapons; and want me to take part in the organized assembly of murderers," says the reasonable man — he who has neither sold nor obscured his conscience. "But I

profess that law — the same that is also professed by you — which long ago forbade not murder only, but all hostility also, and therefore I cannot obey you."

And it is just by this simple means, and by it alone, that the world is being conquered.

November, 1898.

THE BEGINNING OF THE END

DURING last year, in Holland, a young man named Van der Veer was called on to enter the National Guard. To the summons of the commander, Van der Veer answered in the following letter: —

"Thou Shalt do no Murder."

To M. Herman Sneiders, *Commandant of the National Guard of the Midelburg district.*

Dear Sir, — Last week I received a document ordering me to appear at the municipal office, to be, according to law, enlisted in the National Guard. As you probably noticed, I did not appear, and this letter is to inform you, plainly and without equivocation, that I do not intend to appear before the commission. I know well that I am taking a heavy responsibility, that you have the right to punish me, and that you will not fail to use this right. But that does not frighten me. The reasons which lead me to this passive resistance seem to me strong enough to outweigh the responsibility I take.

I, who, if you please, am not a Christian, understand better than most Christians the commandment which is put at the head of this letter, the commandment which is rooted in human nature, in the mind of man. When but a boy, I allowed myself to be taught the trade of soldier, the art of killing; but now I renounce it. I would not kill at the command of others, and thus have murder on my conscience without any personal cause or reason whatever.

Can you mention anything more degrading to a human being than carrying out such murder, such massacre? I am unable to kill, even to see an animal killed; therefore I became a vegetarian. And now I am to be ordered to shoot

men who have done me no harm; for I take it that it is not to shoot at leaves and branches of trees that soldiers are taught to use guns.

But you will reply, perhaps, that the National Guard is besides, and especially, to keep civic order.

M. Commandant, if order really reigned in our society, if the social organism were really healthy — in other words, if there were in our social relations no crying abuses, if it were not established that one man shall die of hunger while another gratifies his every whim of luxury, then you would see me in the front ranks of the defenders of this orderly state. But I flatly decline to help in preserving the present so-called "social order." Why, M. Commandant, should we throw dust in each other's eyes? We both know quite well what the "preservation of order" means: upholding the rich against the poor toilers, who begin to perceive their rights. Do we not know the rôle which the National Guard played in the last strike at Rotterdam? For no reason, the Guard had to be on duty hours and hours to watch over the property of the commercial houses which were affected. Can you for a moment suppose that I should shoot down working-people who are acting quite within their rights? You cannot be so blind. Why then complicate the question? Certainly, it is impossible for me to allow myself to be molded into an obedient National Guardsman such as you want and must have.

For all these reasons, but especially because I hate murder by order, I refuse to serve as a National Guardsman, and ask you not to send me either uniform or arms, because I have a fixed resolve not to use them. — I greet you, M. Commandant,

J. K. Van der Veer.

This letter, in my opinion, has great importance. Refusals of military service in Christian states began when in Christian states military service appeared. Or rather when the states, the power of which rests upon violence, laid claim to Christianity without giving up violence. In truth, it cannot be otherwise. A Christian, whose doctrine enjoins upon him humility, non-resistance to evil, love to all (even to the most malicious), cannot be a soldier; that is, he cannot join a class of men whose business is to kill their fellow-men. Therefore

it is that these Christians have always refused and now refuse military service.

But of true Christians there have always been but few. Most people in Christian countries count as Christians only those who profess the doctrines of some Church, which doctrines have nothing in common, except the name, with true Christianity. That occasionally one in tens of thousands of recruits should refuse to serve did not trouble the hundreds of thousands, the millions, of men who every year accepted military service.

Impossible that the whole enormous majority of Christians who enter upon military service are wrong, and only the exceptions, sometimes uneducated people, are right; while every archbishop and man of learning thinks the service compatible with Christianity. So think the majority, and, untroubled regarding themselves as Christians, they enter the rank of murderers. But now appears a man who, as he himself says, is not a Christian, and who refuses military service, not from religious motives, but from motives of the simplest kind, motives intelligible and common to all men, of whatever religion or nation, whether Catholic, Mohammedan, Buddhist, Confucian, whether Spaniards or Japanese.

Van der Veer refuses military service, not because he follows the commandment, "Thou shalt do no murder," not because he is a Christian, but because he holds murder to be opposed to human nature. He writes that he simply abhors all killing, and abhors it to such a degree that he becomes a vegetarian just to avoid participation in the killing of animals; and, above all, he says, he refuses military service because he thinks "murder by order," that is, the obligation to kill those whom one is ordered to kill (which is the real nature of military service), is incompatible with man's uprightness.

Alluding to the usual objection that if he refuses others will follow his example, and the present social order will be destroyed, he answers that he does not wish to preserve the present social order, because it is bad, because in it the rich dominate the poor, which

ought not to be. So that, even if he had any other doubt as to the propriety of serving or not serving, the one consideration that in serving as a soldier he must, by carrying arms and threatening to kill, support the oppressing rich against the oppressed poor, would compel him to refuse military service.

If Van der Veer were to give as the reason for his refusal his adherence to the Christian religion, those who now join the military service could say, "We are no sectarians, and do not acknowledge Christianity; therefore we do not see the need to act as you do."

But the reasons given by Van der Veer are so simple, clear, and universal that it is impossible not to apply them each to his own case. As things are, to deny the force of these reasons in one's own case, one must say:—

"I like killing, and am ready to kill, not only evil-disposed people, but my own oppressed and unfortunate fellow-countrymen, and I perceive nothing wrong in the promise to kill, at the order of the first officer who comes across me, whomever he bids me kill."

Here is a young man. In whatever surroundings, family, creed, he has been brought up, he has been taught that he must be good, that it is bad to strike and kill, not only men, but even animals; he has been taught that a man must value his uprightness, which uprightness consists in acting according to conscience. This is equally taught to the Confucian in China, the Shintoist in Japan, the Buddhist, and the Mohammedan. Suddenly, after being taught all this, he enters the military service, where he is required to do the precise opposite of what he has been taught. He is told to fit himself for wounding and killing, not animals, but men; he is told to renounce his independence as a man, and obey, in the business of murder, men whom he does not know, utter strangers to him.

To such a command, what right answer can a man of our day make? Surely, only this, "I do not wish to, and I will not."

Exactly this answer Van der Veer gives. And it is

hard to invent any reply to him and to those who, in a similar position, do as he does.

One may not see this point, through attention not having been called to it; one may not understand the import of an action, as long as it remains unexplained. But once pointed out and explained, one can no longer fail to see, or feign blindness to what is quite obvious.

There may still be found men who do not reflect upon their action in entering military service, and men who want war with foreign people, and men who would continue the oppression of the laboring class, and even men who like murder for murder's sake. Such men can continue as soldiers; but even they cannot now fail to know that there are others, the best men in the world, — not only among Christians, but among Mohammedans, Brahmanists, Buddhists, Confucians, — who look upon war and soldiers with aversion and contempt, and whose number grows hourly. No arguments can talk away this plain fact, that a man with any sense of his own dignity cannot enslave himself to an unknown, or even a known, master whose business is killing. Now just in this consists military service, with all its compulsion of discipline.

"But consider the consequences to him who refuses," I am told. "It is all very well for you, an old man exempted from this exaction, and safe by your position, to preach martyrdom; but what about those to whom you preach, and who, believing in you, refuse to serve, and ruin their young lives?"

"But what can I do?" — I answer those who speak thus. — "Because I am old, must I therefore not point out the evil which I clearly, unquestionably see, seeing it precisely because I am old and have lived and thought for long? Must a man who stands on the far side of the river, beyond the reach of that ruffian whom he sees compelling one man to murder another, not cry out to the slayer, bidding him to refrain, for the reason that such interference will still more enrage the ruffian? Moreover, I by no means see why the government, persecuting those who refuse military service, does not

turn its punishment upon me, recognizing in me an instigator. I am not too old for persecution, for any and all sorts of punishments, and my position is a defenseless one. At all events, whether blamed and persecuted or not, whether those who refuse military service are persecuted or not, I, whilst I live, will not cease from saying what I now say; for I cannot refrain from acting according to my conscience." Just in this very thing is Christian truth powerful, irresistible; namely, that, being the teaching of truth, in affecting men it is not to be governed by outside considerations. Whether young or old, whether persecuted or not, he who adopts the Christian, the true, conception of life, cannot shrink from the claims of his conscience. In this is the essence and peculiarity of Christianity, distinguishing it from all other religious teachings; and in this is its unconquerable power.

Van der Veer says he is not a Christian. But the motives of his refusal and action are Christian. He refuses because he does not wish to kill a brother man; he does not obey, because the commands of his conscience are more binding upon him than the commands of men. Precisely on this account is Van der Veer's refusal so important. Thereby he shows that Christianity is not a sect or creed which some may profess and others reject; but that it is naught else than a life's following of that light of reason which illumines all men. The merit of Christianity is not that it prescribes to men such and such acts, but that it foresees and points out the way by which all mankind must go and does go.

Those men who now behave rightly and reasonably do so, not because they follow prescriptions of Christ, but because that line of action which was pointed out eighteen hundred years ago has now become identified with human conscience.

This is why I think the action and letter of Van der Veer are of great import.

As a fire lit on a prairie or in a forest will not die out until it has burned all that is dry and dead, and

therefore combustible, so the truth, once articulated in human utterance, will not cease its work until all falsehood, appointed for destruction, surrounding and hiding the truth on all sides as it does, is destroyed. The fire smolders long; but as soon as it flashes into flame, all that can burn burns quickly.

So with the truth, which takes long to reach a right expression, but once that clear expression in word is given, falsehood and wrong are soon to be destroyed. One of the partial manifestations of Christianity, — the idea that men can live without the institution of slavery, — although it had been included in the Christian concept, was clearly expressed, so it seems to me, only by writers at the end of the eighteenth century. Up to that time, not only the ancient pagans, as Plato and Aristotle, but even men near to us in time, and Christians, could not imagine a human society without slavery. Thomas More could not imagine even a Utopia without slavery. So also men of the beginning of this century could not imagine the life of man without war. Only after the Napoleonic wars was the idea clearly expressed that man can live without war. And now a hundred years have gone since the first clear expression of the idea that mankind can live without slavery; and there is no longer slavery in Christian nations. And there shall not pass away another hundred years after the clear utterance of the idea that mankind can live without war, before war shall cease to be. Very likely some form of armed violence will remain, just as wage-labor remains after the abolition of slavery; but, at least, wars and armies will be abolished in the outrageous form, so repugnant to reason and moral sense, in which they now exist.

Signs that this time is near are many. These signs are such as the helpless position of governments, which more and more increase their armaments; the multiplication of taxation and the discontent of the nations; the extreme degree of efficiency with which deadly weapons are constructed; the activity of congresses and societies of peace; but above all, the refusals of

individuals to take military service. In these refusals is the key to the solution of the question. You say that military service is necessary; that, without soldiers, disasters will happen to us. That may be; but, holding the idea of right and wrong which is universal among men to-day, yourselves included, I cannot kill men to order. So that if, as you say, military service is essential — then arrange it in some way not so contradictory to my, and your, conscience. But, until you have so arranged it, do not claim from me what is against my conscience, which I can by no means disobey.

Thus, inevitably, and very soon, must answer all honest and reasonable men; not only the men of Christendom, but even Mohammedans and the so-called heathen, the Brahmanists, Buddhists, and Confucians. Maybe. by the power of inertia, the soldiering trade will go on for some time to come; but even now the question stands solved in the human conscience, and with every day, every hour, more and more men come to the same solution; and to stay the movement is, at this juncture, not possible. Every recognition of a truth by man, or rather, every deliverance from an error, as in the case of slavery before our eyes, is always attained through a conflict between the awakening conscience and the inertia of the old condition.

At first the inertia is so powerful, the conscience so weak, that the first attempt to escape from error is met only with astonishment. The new truth seems madness. Is it proposed to live without slavery? Then who will work? Is it proposed to live without fighting? Then everybody will come and conquer us.

But the power of conscience grows, inertia weakens, and astonishment is changing to sneers and contempt. "The Holy Scriptures acknowledge masters and slaves. These relations have always been, and now come these wiseacres who want to change the whole world;" so men spoke concerning slavery. "All the scientists and philosophers recognize the lawfulness, and even sacredness, of war; and are we immediately to believe that there is no need of war?"

So men speak concerning war. But conscience continues to grow and to become clear; the number increases of those who recognize the new truth, and sneer and contempt give place to subterfuge and trickery. Those who support the error make slow to understand and admit the incongruity and cruelty of the practice they defend, but think its abolition impossible just now, so delaying its abolition indefinitely. "Who does not know that slavery is an evil? But men are not yet ripe for freedom, and liberation will produce horrible disasters" — men used to say concerning slavery, forty years ago. "Who does not know that war is an evil? But while mankind is still so bestial, abolition of armies will do more harm than good," men say concerning war to-day.

Nevertheless, the idea is doing its work; it grows, it burns the falsehood; and the time has come when the madness, the uselessness, the harmfulness, and wickedness of the error are so clear (as it happened in the sixties with slavery in Russia and America) that even now it is impossible to justify it. Such is the present position as to war. Just as, in the sixties, no attempts were made to justify slavery, but only to maintain it; so to-day no man attempts any longer to justify war and armies, but only tries, in silence, to use the inertia which still supports them, knowing very well that this cruel and immoral organization for murder, which seems so powerful, may at any moment crumble down, never more to be raised.

Once a drop of water oozes through the dam, once a brick falls out from a great building, once a mesh comes loose in the strongest net — the dam bursts, the building falls, the net unweaves. Such a drop, such a brick, such a loosed mesh, it seems to me, is the refusal of Van der Veer, explained by reasons universal to all mankind.

Upon this refusal of Van der Veer like refusals must follow more and more often. As soon as these become numerous, the very men (their name is legion) who the day before said, "It is impossible to live without war,"

will say at once that they have this long time declared the madness and immorality of war, and they will advise everybody to follow Van der Veer's example. Then, of wars and armies, as these are now, there will remain only the recollection.

And this time is coming.

January 6, 1897.

CARTHAGO DELENDA EST[1]

La Vita internationale and *L'Humanité nouvelle* have sent me the following letter: —

"Sir, — With the object of furthering the development of humanitarian ideas and civilization, *La Vita internationale* (of Milan), with the support of *L'Humanité nouvelle* (of Paris and Brussels), has deemed it necessary to concern itself with the difficult problem which has of late arisen in all its gravity and importance, owing to the delicate question about which France and the whole world has become so ardently impassioned, — we mean the problem of war and militarism. With this aim in view, we beg all those in Europe that take part in politics, science, art, and the labor movement, and even those that occupy the foremost positions in the army, to contribute to this most civilizing task by replying to the following questions: —

"1. Is war among civilized nations still required by history, law, and progress?

"2. What are the intellectual, moral, physical, economical, and political effects of militarism?

"3. What, in the interests of the world's future civilization, are the solutions which should be given to the grave problems of war and militarism?

"4. What means would most rapidly lead to these solutions?"

I cannot conceal the feelings of disgust, indignation, and even despair which were aroused in me by this letter. Enlightened, sensible, good Christian people, who inculcate the principle of love and brotherhood, who regard murder as an awful crime, who, with very few

[1] First printed in *The Westminster Gazette*.

exceptions, are unable to kill an animal, — all these people suddenly, provided that these crimes are called war, not only acknowledge the destruction, plunder, and killing of people to be right and legal, but themselves contribute toward these robberies and murders, prepare themselves for them, take part in them, are proud of them.

Moreover, always and everywhere one and the same phenomenon repeats itself, *viz.*, that the great majority of people — all working-people — those same people who carry out the robberies and murders, and on whom the burden falls — neither devise, nor prepare, nor desire these things, but take part in them against their will, merely because they are placed in such a position and are so instigated that it appears to them, to each individual, that they would suffer more were they to refuse. Whereas those who devise and prepare for these plunders and murders, and who compel the working-people to carry them out, are but an insignificant minority, who live in luxury and idleness, upon the labor of the workers.

This deceit has already been going on for a long time, but lately the insolence of the impostors has reached its extremest development, and a great share of what labor produces is being taken away from the workers, and used for making preparations for plundering and killing. In all the constitutional countries of Europe the workers themselves — all, without exception — are called upon to take part in these robberies and murders; international relations are purposely always more and more complicated, and this leads on to war; peaceful countries are being plundered without the least cause; every year, in some place or other, people murder and rob; and all live in constant dread of general mutual robbery and murder.

It seems evident that, if these things are done, it can only be because the great mass of people are deceived by the minority to whom this deceit is advantageous, and therefore that the first task of those who are anxious to free people from the evils caused by this

mutual murdering and plundering should be to expose the deception under which the masses are laboring; to point out to them how the deceit is perpetrated, by what means it is being upheld, and how to get rid of it.

The enlightened people of Europe, however, do nothing of the kind, but, under the pretext of furthering the establishment of peace, they assemble now in one, now in another city of Europe, and, seated at tables, with most serious faces, they discuss the question how best to persuade those brigands who live by their plunder to give up robbing, and become peaceful citizens; and then they put the profound questions: first, whether war is still desirable from the standpoint of history, law, and progress (as if such fictions, invented by us, could demand from us deviation from the fundamental moral law of our life); secondly, as to what are the consequences of war (as if there could be any doubt that the consequences of war are always general distress and corruption); and finally, as to how to solve the problem of war (as if it were a difficult problem how to free deluded people from a delusion which we clearly see).

This is terrible! We see, for instance, how healthy, calm, and frequently happy people year after year arrive at some gambling-den like Monte Carlo, and, benefiting no one but the keepers of those dens, leave there their health, peace, honor, and often their lives. We pity these people; we see clearly that the deceit to which they are subjected consists in those temptations whereby gamblers are allured, in the inequality of the chances, and in the infatuation of gamblers who, though fully aware that in general they are sure to be losers, nevertheless hope for once at least to be more fortunate than the rest. All this is perfectly clear.

And then, in order to free people from these miseries, we — instead of pointing out to them the temptations to which they are subjected, the fact that they are sure to lose, and the immorality of gambling, which is based on the expectation of other people's misfortunes — assemble with grave faces at meetings, and discuss how to arrange that the keepers of gambling-houses

should of their own accord shut up their establishments; we write books about it, and we put questions to ourselves as to whether history, law, and progress require the existence of gambling-houses, and as to what are the economical, intellectual, moral, and other consequences of roulette.

If a man is given to drink, and I tell him that he himself can leave off drinking and that he must do so, there is a hope that he will listen to me; but if I tell him that his drunkenness is a complicated and difficult problem which we learned men are trying to solve at our meetings, then in all probability he will, while awaiting the solution of this problem, continue to drink.

Thus also with these false and refined external, scientific means of abolishing war, such as international tribunals, arbitration, and similar absurdities with which we occupy ourselves, while all the time carefully omitting to mention the most simple, essential, and self-evident method of causing war to cease — a method plain for all to see.

In order that people who do not want war should not fight, it is not necessary to have either international law, arbitration, international tribunals, or solutions of problems; but it is merely necessary that those who are subjected to the deceit should awake and free themselves from the spell or enchantment under which they find themselves. The way to do away with war is for those who do not want war, who regard participation in it as a sin, to refrain from fighting. This method has been preached from the earliest times by Christian writers such as Tertullian and Origen, as well as by the Paulicians, and by their successors, the Mennonites, Quakers, and Herrnhuters. The sin, harmfulness, and senselessness of military service have been written about and exposed in every way by Dymond, Garrison, and, twenty years ago, by Ballou, as well as by myself. The method I have mentioned has been adopted in the past, and of late has been frequently resorted to by isolated individuals in Austria, Prussia, Holland, Switzerland, and Russia, as well as by whole

societies like the Quakers, Mennonites, and Nazarenes, and recently by the Dukhobors, of whom a whole population of fifteen thousand are now for the third year resisting the powerful Russian government, and, notwithstanding all the sufferings to which they have been subjected, do not submit to its demands that they should take part in the crimes of military service.

But the enlightened friends of peace not only refrain from recommending this method, but cannot bear the mention of it; when it is brought before them they pretend not to have noticed it, or, if they cannot help noticing it, they gravely shrug their shoulders and express their pity for those uneducated and unreasonable men who adopt such an ineffectual, silly method, when such a good one exists,— namely, to sprinkle salt on the bird one wishes to catch, *i.e.* to persuade the governments, who only exist by violence and deceit, to forsake both the one and the other.

They tell us that the misunderstandings which arise between governments will be settled by tribunals or arbitration. But the governments do not at all desire the settlement of misunderstandings. On the contrary, if there be none they invent some, it being only by such misunderstanding with the governments that they are afforded a pretext for keeping up the army upon which their power is based. Thus the enlightened friends of peace strive to divert the attention of the working, suffering masses from the only method that can deliver them from the slavery in which they are held (from their youth upward), first by patriotism, next by oaths administered by the mercenary priests of a perverted Christianity, and lastly, by the fear of punishment.

In our days of close and peaceful relations between peoples of different nationalities and countries, the deceit called patriotism (which always claims the preeminence of one state or nationality over the rest, and which is therefore always involving people in useless and pernicious wars) is too evident for reasonable people of our age not to free themselves from it; and the religious deceit of the obligation of the oath (which

is distinctly forbidden by that very gospel which the governments profess) is, thank God, ever less and less believed in. So that what really prevents the great majority from refusing to take part in military service is merely fear of the punishments which are inflicted by the governments for such refusals. This fear, however, is only a result of the government deceit, and has no other basis than hypnotism.

The governments may and should fear those who refuse to serve, and, indeed, they are afraid of them because every refusal undermines the prestige of the deceit by which the governments have the people in their power. But those who refuse have no ground whatever to fear a government that demands crimes from them. In refusing military service every man risks much less than he would were he to enter it.

The refusal of military service and the punishment — imprisonment, exile — is only an advantageous insurance of oneself against the dangers of the military service. In entering the service every man risks having to take part in war (for which he is being prepared), and during war he may be like a man sentenced to death, placed in a position in which under the most difficult and painful circumstances he will almost certainly be killed or crippled, as I have seen in Sevastopol, where a regiment marched to a fort where two regiments had already been destroyed, and stood there until it too was entirely exterminated. Another, more profitable, chance is that the man who enters the army will not be killed, but will only fall ill and die in the unhealthy conditions of military service. A third chance is that, having been insulted by his superior, he will be unable to contain himself, will answer sharply, will break the discipline, and will be subjected to punishment much worse than that to which he would have been liable had he refused military service.

The best chance, however, is that instead of the imprisonment or exile to which a person refusing military service is liable, he will pass three or five years of his life amid vicious surroundings, practising the art of killing, being

all the while in the same captivity as in prison, and in humiliating submission to depraved people. This in the first place.

Secondly, in refusing military service, every man, however strange it may seem, can yet always hope to escape punishment — upon his refusal being that last exposure of the governments' deceit which will render any further punishment for such a deed, the punishment of one who refuses to participate in their oppression, impossible. So that submission to the demands of military service is evidently only submission to the hypnotization of the masses — the utterly futile rush of Panurge's sheep into the water, to their evident destruction.

Moreover, besides the consideration of advantage, there is yet another reason which should impel every man to refuse military service who is not hypnotized and is conscious of the importance of his actions. No one can help desiring that his life should not be an aimless and useless existence, but that it should be of service to God and man; yet frequently a man spends his life without finding an opportunity for such service. The summons to accept the military service presents precisely such an opportunity to every man of our time.

Every man, in refusing to take part in military service or to pay taxes to a government which uses them for military purposes, is, by this refusal, rendering a great service to God and man, for he is thereby making use of the most efficacious means of furthering the progressive movement of mankind toward that better social order which it is striving after and must eventually attain. But not only is it advantageous to refuse the participation in the military service, and not only should the majority of the men of our time so refuse; it is, moreover, *impossible* not to refuse, if only they are not hypnotized. To every man there are some actions which are morally impossible — as impossible as are certain physical actions. And the promise of slavish obedience to strangers, and to immoral people who have the murder of men as their acknowledged object, is, to

the majority of men, if only they be free from hypnotism, just such a morally impossible action. And therefore it is not only advantageous to and obligatory on every man to refuse to participate in the military service, but it is also impossible for him not to do so if only he be free from the stupefaction of hypnotism.

"But what will happen when all people refuse military service, and there is no check nor hold over the wicked, and the wicked triumph, and there is no protection against savage people — against the yellow race — who will come and conquer us?"

I will say nothing about the fact that, as it is, the wicked have long been triumphing, that they are still triumphing, and that while fighting one another they have long dominated the Christians, so that there is no need to fear what has already been accomplished; nor will I say anything with regard to the dread of the savage yellow race, whom we persistently provoke and instruct in war, — that being a mere excuse, and one-hundredth part of the army now kept up in Europe being sufficient for the imaginary protection against them, — I will say nothing about all this, because the consideration of the general result to the world of such or such actions cannot serve as a guide for our conduct and activity.

To man is given another guide, and that an unfailing one, — the guide of his conscience, following which he indubitably knows that he is doing what he should do. Therefore, all considerations of the danger that threatens every individual who refuses military service, as well as what menaces the world in consequence of such refusals — all these are but a particle of that enormous and monstrous deceit in which Christian mankind is enmeshed, and which is being carefully maintained by the governments who exist by the power of this deceit.

If man act in accordance with what is dictated to him by his reason, his conscience, and his God, only the very best can result for himself as well as for the world.

People complain of the evil conditions of life in our Christian world. But is it possible for it to be otherwise,

when all of us acknowledge not only that fundamental divine law proclaimed some thousands of years ago, "Thou shalt not kill," but also the law of love and brotherhood of all men, and yet, notwithstanding this, every man in the European world practically disavows this fundamental divine law acknowledged by him, and at the command of president, emperor, or minister, of Nicholas or William, arrays himself in a ridiculous costume, takes an instrument of murder and says, "Here I am, ready to injure, ruin, or kill any one I am ordered to"?

What must a society be like which is composed of such men? Such a society must be dreadful, and indeed it is so!

Awake, brethren! Listen neither to those villains who, from your childhood, infect you with the diabolic spirit of patriotism, opposed to righteousness and truth, and only necessary in order to deprive you of your property, your freedom, and your human dignity; nor to those ancient impostors who preach war in the name of a cruel and vindictive God invented by them, and in the name of a perverted and false Christianity; nor, even less, to those modern Sadducees who, in the name of science and civilization, aiming only at the continuation of the present state of things, assemble at meetings, write books, and make speeches, promising to organize a good and peaceful life for people without their making any effort! Do not believe them. Believe only the consciousness which tells you that you are neither beasts nor slaves, but free men, responsible for your actions, and therefore unable to be murderers either of your own accord or at the will of those who live by these murders.

And it is only necessary for you to awake in order to realize all the horror and insanity of that which you have been and are doing, and, having realized this, to cease that evil which you yourselves abhor, and which is ruining you. If only you were to refrain from the evil which you yourselves detest, those ruling impostors, who first corrupt and then oppress you, would disappear like owls before the daylight, and then those new,

human, brotherly conditions of life would be established for which Christendom — weary of suffering, exhausted by deceit, and lost in insolvable contradictions — is longing. Only let every man without any intricate or sophisticated arguments accomplish that which to-day his conscience unfailingly bids him do, and he will recognize the truth of the Gospel words: —

"If any man will do his will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself."[1]

[1] John vii. 17.

1899.

SHAME!

THERE was a time between 1820 and 1830 when the officers of the Semenof regiment — the flower of the youth at that time; men who were for the most part Freemasons, and subsequently Decembrists[1] — decided not to use corporal punishment in their regiment, and, notwithstanding the stringent discipline then required, theirs continued to be a model regiment without corporal punishment.

The officer in charge of one of the companies of this same Semenof regiment, meeting Serge Ivanovitch Muravief — one of the best men of his, or indeed of any, time, — spoke of a certain soldier, a thief and a drunkard, saying that such a man can only be tamed with rods. Serge Muravief did not agree with him, and proposed to transfer the man into his own company.

The transfer was made, and almost the next day the soldier stole a comrade's boots, sold them for drink, and made a disturbance. Serge Ivanovitch mustered the company, called out the soldier, and said to him: "You know that in my company we neither strike men nor flog them, and I am not going to punish you. I shall pay, with my own money, for the boots you stole; but I ask you, not for my sake, but for your own, to think over your way of life, and to amend it." And after giving the man some friendly counsel, Serge Ivanovitch let him go.

The man again got drunk and fought, and again he was not punished, but only exhorted: —

[1] Members of the party which attempted, but failed, to secure by force a liberal constitution for Russia at the time Nicholas I. ascended the throne. — TR.

"You are doing yourself great harm. If you will amend, you yourself will be the better for it. Therefore I ask you not to do these things any more."

The man was so struck by this new kind of treatment that he completely altered, and became a model soldier.

This incident was related to me by Serge Ivanovitch's brother, Matthew Ivanovitch, who, like his brother, and all the best men of his day, considered corporal punishment a shameful relic of barbarism, disgraceful to those who inflict it, rather than to those who endure it. When telling this story he could never refrain from tears of emotion and delight. And, indeed, for those who heard him tell it, it was hard not to follow his example.

That is how educated Russians, seventy-five years ago, regarded corporal punishment. And in our day, seventy-five years having gone by, the grandsons of these men take their places as magistrates at sessions, and calmly discuss whether such and such a full-grown man (often the father of a family, or sometimes even a grandfather) should or should not be flogged, and how many strokes of the rod he ought to have.

The most advanced of these grandsons, meeting in committees and local government councils, draw up declarations, addresses, and petitions, to the effect that, on certain hygienic or pedagogic grounds,[1] it would be better not to flog all the muzhiks (people of the peasant class), but only those who have not passed all the classes of the national schools.

Evidently a great change has occurred in what we call the educated upper classes. The men of the twenties, considering the infliction of corporal punishment to be disgraceful to themselves, were able to get rid of it even in the military service where it was deemed indispensable; but the men of our day calmly apply it, not to sol-

[1] By petitioning, openly, for the repeal of such laws as that which empowers the local magistrates to have peasants flogged, the petitioners would risk being looked at askance by those in power, and might easily lose any places they held under government. But as members of local health committees, or of committees to promote education, it is sometimes possible for people (while appearing anxious only to further the special cause intrusted to them) to utter veiled protests with a minimum amount of risk. — Tr.

diers only, but to any man of one special class of Russian people, and cautiously, diplomatically, in their committees and assemblies, draw up addresses and petitions to the government, with all sorts of reservations and circumlocutions, saying that there are hygienic objections to punishment by flogging, and therefore its use should be limited; or that it would be desirable only to flog those peasants who have not gone through a certain school course; or not to flog peasants referred to in the manifesto issued on the occasion of the Tsar's marriage.

Evidently a terrible change has taken place among the so-called upper classes of Russian society. And what is most astonishing is, that it has come about just while, — in the very class which it is considered necessary to expose to this revolting, coarse, and stupid torture by flogging, — during these same seventy-five years, and especially during the last thirty-five years (since the emancipation of the serfs), an equally important change has taken place in the contrary direction.

While the upper, governing classes have sunk to a plane so coarse and morally degraded that they have legalized flogging, and can calmly discuss it, the mental and moral plane of the peasant class has so risen, that corporal punishment has become for them, not only a physical, but also a moral torture.

I have heard and read of cases of suicide committed by peasants sentenced to be flogged, and I cannot doubt that such cases occur, for I have myself seen a most ordinary young peasant turn white as a sheet, and lose control of his voice, at the mere mention, in the District Court, of the possibility of it being inflicted on him. I have seen how another peasant, forty years old, who had been condemned to corporal punishment, wept, when — in reply to my inquiry whether the sentence had been executed — he had to reply that it had been.

I know, too, the case of a respected, elderly peasant of my acquaintance, who was sentenced to flogging because he had quarreled with the starosta, not noticing that the starosta was wearing his badge of office. The man was brought to the District Court, and from there

to the shed in which the punishment is usually inflicted. The watchman came with the rods, and the peasant was told to strip.

"Parmen Ermil'itch, you know I have a married son," said the peasant, addressing the starshina, or elder, and trembling all over. "Can't this be avoided? You know it's a sin."

"It's the authorities, Petrovitch; I should be glad enough myself, — but there's no help for it," replied the elder, abashed.

Petrovitch undressed and lay down.

"Christ suffered and told us to," said he.

The clerk, an eye-witness, told me the story, and said that every man's hand trembled, and none of those present could look into one another's eyes, feeling that they were doing something dreadful. And these are the people whom it is considered necessary, and probably for some reason advantageous, to beat with rods like animals — though it is forbidden to torture even animals.

For the benefit of our Christian and enlightened country it is necessary to subject to this most stupid, most indecent, and most degrading punishment, not all the inhabitants of this Christian and enlightened country, but only that class which is the most industrious, useful, moral, and numerous.

The highest authorities of an enormous Christian empire, nineteen centuries after Christ, to prevent violation of the law, can devise nothing wiser and more moral than to take the transgressors, — grown-up, and sometimes elderly, people, — undress them, lay them on the floor, and beat their bottoms with birches.[1]

And people, who consider themselves most advanced, and who are grandsons of those who, seventy-five years ago, got rid of corporal punishment, now, in our day, most respectfully, and quite seriously, petition his excellency the minister, or whoever it may be, that there

[1] And why choose just this stupid, brutal method of causing pain, and not something else? Why not stick needles into people's shoulders or other parts? or squeeze their hands and feet in vices? or do something of that kind? — AUTHOR'S NOTE.

should not be so much flogging of grown-up Russians, because the doctors are of opinion that it is unhealthy; or that those who have a school diploma should not be whipped; or that those who were to be flogged about the time of the emperor's marriage should be let off. And the wise government meets such frivolous petitions with profound silence, or even prohibits them.

Can one seriously petition on this matter? Is there really any question? Surely there are some deeds which, whether perpetrated by private individuals or by governments, one cannot calmly discuss, and condemn only under certain circumstances. And the flogging of adult members of one particular class of Russian people, in our time, and among our mild and Christianly enlightened folk, is such a deed. To hinder such crimes against all law, human and divine, one cannot diplomatically approach the government under cover of hygienic, or educational, or loyalistic considerations. Of such deeds we must either not speak at all, or we must speak straight to the point, and always with detestation and abhorrence. To ask that only those peasants who are literate should be exempt from being beaten on their bare buttocks, is as if, in a land where the law decreed that unfaithful wives should be punished by being stripped and exposed in the streets, people were to petition that this punishment should only be inflicted on such as could not knit stockings, or do something of that kind.

About such deeds one cannot "most humbly pray," or "lay our petition at the foot of the throne," etc.; such deeds must only, and can only, be denounced. And such deeds should be denounced, because when an appearance of legality is given to them, they disgrace all of us who live in a country in which they are committed. For if it is legal to flog a peasant, this has been enacted for my benefit also, to secure my tranquillity and well-being. And this is intolerable.

I will not, and I cannot, acknowledge a law which infringes all law, human and divine; and I cannot imagine myself confederate with those who enact and confirm such legalized crimes.

If such abominations must be discussed, there is but one thing to say, viz., that no such law can exist; that no ukase, or insignia, or seals, or imperial commands, can make a law out of crime. But that, on the contrary, the dressing up in legal form of such crimes (as that the grown men of one — only one — class, may at the will of another, a worse, class, — the nobles and the officials, — be subjected to an indecent, savage and revolting punishment) shows, better than anything else, that where such sham legalization of crime is possible, there exist no laws at all, but merely the savage license of brute force.

If one has to speak of corporal punishment inflicted on the peasant alone, the needful thing is, not to defend the rights of the local government, or appeal from a governor (who has vetoed a petition to exempt literate peasants from flogging) to a minister, — and from the minister to the senate, and from the senate to the emperor, — as was proposed by the Tambof local assembly, — but one must unceasingly proclaim, and cry aloud, that such applications of a brutal punishment (already abandoned for children) to one — and that the best — class of Russians, is disgraceful to all who, directly or indirectly, participate in it.

Petrovitch, who lay down to be beaten after crossing himself and saying, "Christ suffered and told us to," forgave his tormentors, and after the flogging remained the man he was before. The only result of the torture inflicted upon him was to make him scorn the authority which decrees such punishments. But to many young people, not only the punishment itself, but often even the knowledge that it is possible, acts debasingly on their moral feelings, brutalizing some men and making others desperate. Yet even that is not the chief evil. The greatest evil is in the mental condition of those who arrange, sanction and decree these abominations, of those who employ them as threats, and of all who live in the conviction that such violations of justice and humanity are needful conditions of a good and orderly life. What terrible moral perversion must exist in the

minds and hearts of those — often the young — who, with an air of profound practical wisdom, say (as I have myself heard said) that it won't do not to flog peasants, and that it is better for the peasants themselves to be flogged.

These are the people most to be pitied for the debasement into which they have sunk, and in which they are stagnating.

Therefore, the emancipation of the Russian people from the degrading influence of a legalized crime, is, from every aspect, a matter of enormous importance. And this emancipation will be accomplished, not when exemption from corporal punishment is obtained by those who have a school diploma, or by any other set of peasants, nor even when all the peasants but one are exempted; but it will be accomplished only when the governing classes confess their sin and humbly repent.[1]

December 14, 1895.

[1] Though "Shame" was written by Count Tolstoï in December, 1895, and incompletely printed soon after in a Russian newspaper, this is not only the first English translation published of the article, but it is the first time it has been printed complete in any language; for the Russian version referred to above was mutilated to meet the requirements of the Russian censor, and failed to convey the author's full meaning.

The brutality against which the article protests continues to be practised in Russia, and is still legal. The hope of obtaining moral results by flogging those of whose conduct we disapprove is, however, not confined to Russia. The question of corporal punishment is one which claims attention in England and in some parts of America to-day. — Tr.

NIKOLAÏ PALKIN

WE were spending the night at the house of a soldier ninety-five years old, who had served under Alexander I. and Nicholas I.

"Tell me, are you ready to die?"

"Ready to die? How should I be yet? I used to be afraid of dying, but now I pray God for only one thing; that God would be pleased to let me make my confession and partake of the communion; I have so many sins on my conscience."

"What sins?"

"How can you ask? Let us see, when was it I served? Under Nicholas. Was the service then such as it is now? How was it then? Uh! it fills me with horror even to remember it. Then Alexander came. The soldiers used to praise this Alexander. They said he was gracious."

I remembered the last days of Alexander, when twenty men out of every hundred were beaten to death. Nicholas must have been a terror, if in comparison with him Alexander was called gracious.

"I happened to serve under Nicholas," said the old man, and he immediately began to grow animated and to give me his recollections.

"How was it then? At that time fifty blows with the rod was thought nothing.... one hundred and fifty, two hundred, three hundred.... they used to whip men to death, and with cudgels too..... Never a week went by that they did not beat one or two men to death from each regiment. To-day people don't know what a cudgel is, but then the word 'palka' was never out of men's mouths. 'Palka!' 'Palka!'

"Among us soldiers he was called Nikolaï Palkin — Nicholas the cudgeler. He was really Nikolaï Pavlovitch, and yet he was called nothing else but Nikolaï Palkin. That was his universal nickname. That's what I remember of that time," continued the old man. "Yes, when one has lived out a century, it is time for one to die, and when you think of it, it becomes hard.

"I have so many sins on my soul! It was a subordinate's work. One had to apply one hundred and fifty blows to a soldier" — the old man had been non-commissioned officer and sergeant major, but was now "kandidat" — "and you give him two hundred. And the man died on your hands, and you tortured him to death .... that was a sin.

"The non-commissioned officers used to beat the young soldiers to death. They would strike them anywhere with the butt-end of the gun or with the fist, over the heart or on the head, and the man would die. And there was never any redress. If a man died, murdered that way, the authorities would write, 'Died by the will of God,' and thus it was covered up. And at that time did I realize what it meant? One thought only of oneself. But now when you crawl up on top of the stove and can't sleep o' nights, you keep thinking about it and living it over again. Good as it is to take the holy communion in accordance with the Christian law and be absolved, still horror seizes you. When you remember all that you have been through, yes, and what others have suffered on your account, then no other hell is necessary; it is worse than any hell."

I vividly imagined what must have been the recollections of this solitary old man there, face to face with death, and a pang went through my heart. I remembered other horrors besides the cudgels, which he must have witnessed: men killed in running the gauntlet, put to death by shooting, the slaughter and pillage of cities in war — he had taken part in the Polish war — and I thought I would question him particularly in regard to all this: I asked him about running the gauntlet. He gave full particulars about this horrible punishment:

how they drove the man, with his arms tied, between two rows of soldiers provided with sharpened sticks, how all struck at him, while behind the soldiers marched the officers shouting "Strike harder." When he told about this the old man gave the order in a commanding tone, evidently well satisfied with his memory and the commanding tone with which he spoke.

He told all the particulars without manifesting the slightest remorse, as if he were telling how they killed oxen and prepared fresh meat. He related how they drove the unhappy victims back and forth between the lines, how the tortured man would at last stumble and fall on the bayonets, how at first the bloody wheals began to appear, how they would cross one another, how gradually the wheals would blend together and swell and the blood would spurt out, how the blood-stained flesh would hang in clots, how the bones would be laid bare; how the wretch at first would scream, then only dully groan at every step and at every blow; how at length no sound would be heard, and the doctor, who was in attendance for this very purpose, would come up, feel the man's pulse, examine and decide whether the punishment could go on, whether he was already beaten to death, or whether it should be postponed till another occasion; and then they would bring him to, so that his wounds might be dressed, and he might be made ready to receive the full sum of blows which certain wild beasts, with Nikolaï Palkin at their head, had decided ought to be administered to him.

The doctor employed his science to keep the man from dying before he had endured all the tortures which his body could be made to endure. And the man, when he could no longer walk a step, was laid flat on the ground in his cloak, and with that bloody swelling over his whole back was carried to the hospital to be treated, so that when he was well again they might give him the thousand or two blows which he had not yet received, and could not bear all at one time.

He told how the victims implored death to come to their relief, and how the officers would not grant it to

them, but would heal them for a second and third time, and at last beat them to death.

And all this because a man had either deserted from his regiment, or had the courage or the audacity and the self-confidence to complain in behalf of his comrades because they were ill fed, and those in command pilfered their rations.

He told all this; and when I tried to draw from him some expression of remorse for these things, he was at first amazed and afterward alarmed.

"No," said he, "that was all right; it was the judgment of the court. Was it my fault? It was by order of the court and according to law."

He displayed the same serenity and lack of remorse regarding the horrors of war, in which he had taken part, and of which he had seen so much in Turkey and Poland.

He told about children murdered, about prisoners dying of cold and starvation, about a young boy — a Polyak — run through by a bayonet and impaled on a tree. And when I asked him if his conscience did not torment him on account of these deeds, he utterly failed to understand me.

"This is all a part of war, according to law; for the Tsar and the fatherland. These deeds are not only not wrong, but are such as are honorable and brave, and atone for many sins." The only things that troubled him were his private actions, the fact that he, when an officer, had beaten and punished men. These actions tormented his conscience. But in order to be pardoned for them he had a resource: this was the holy communion, which he hoped he should be enabled to partake of before he died, and for which he was beseeching his niece. His niece promised that he should have it, because she recognized the importance of it; and he was content.

The fact that he had helped to ruin and destroy innocent women and children, that he had killed men with bullet and bayonet, that he had stood in line and whipped men to death and dragged them off to the hospital and back to torture again, — all this did not trouble him

at all; all this was none of his business, all this was done, not by him, but as it were, by some one else.

How was it possible that this old man, if he had understood what ought to have been clear to him, as he stood on the very threshold of eternity, did not realize that between him and his conscience and God, as now on the eve of death, there was and could be no mediator, so there was and could be none even at that moment when they compelled him to torture and beat men? How is it that he did not understand that now there was nothing that could atone for the evil he had done to men when he might have refrained from doing it? that he did not understand that there is an eternal law which he always knew and could not help knowing — a law which demands love and tenderness for man; and what he called law was a wicked and godless deception to which he should not give credence?

It was terrible to think of what must have arisen before his imagination during his sleepless nights on the oven, and his despair, if he had realized that when he had the possibility of doing good and evil to men, he had done nothing but evil; that when he had learned the distinctions of good and evil nothing else was now in his power than uselessly to torment himself and repent. His sufferings would have been awful!

But why should one desire to trouble him? Why torment the conscience of an old man on the very verge of death? Better give it comfort. Why annoy the people in recalling what is already past?

Past? What is past? Can a severe disease be past only because we say that it is past? It does not pass away, and never will pass away, and cannot pass away as long as we do not acknowledge ourselves sick. To be cured of a disease, one must first recognize it. And this we do not do. Not only do we fail to do it, but we employ all our powers not to see it, not to recognize it.

Meantime, the disease, instead of passing away, changes its form, sinks deeper into the flesh, the blood, the bones. The disease is this: that men born good and gentle, men with love and mercy rooted in

their hearts, perpetrate such atrocities on one another, themselves not knowing why or wherefore.

Our native Russians, men naturally sweet-tempered, good, and kind, permeated with the spirit of Christ's teaching, men who confess in their souls that they would be insulted at the suggestion of their not sharing their last crust with the poor, or pitying those in prison, — these same men spend the best years of their lives in murdering and torturing their brethren, and not only are not remorseful for such deeds, but consider them honorable, or at least indispensable, and just as unavoidable as eating or breathing.

Is not this a horrible disease? Is it not the moral duty of every one to do all in his power to cure it, and first and foremost to point it out, to call it by name?

The old soldier had spent all his life in torturing and murdering other men. We ask, Why talk about it? The soldier did not consider himself to blame; and those dreadful deeds — the cudgel, the running of the gauntlet, and the other things — are all past; why then recall that which is already ancient history? This is done away with.

Nikolaï Palkin is no more. Why recall his régime? Only the old soldier remembered it before his death. Why stir the people up about it?

Thus in the time of Nicholas they spoke of Alexander. In the same way in the time of Alexander they recalled the deeds of Paul. Thus in the time of Paul they spoke of Catharine and all her profligacies, and all the follies of her lovers. Thus in the time of Catharine they spoke of Peter, and so on and so on. Why recall it?

Yes, why?

If I have a severe or dangerous disease difficult to cure, and I am relieved of it, I shall always be glad to be reminded of it. I shall not mention it only when I am suffering, and my suffering continues and grows worse all the time, and I wish to deceive myself; only then I shall not mention it! And we do not mention it because we know that we are still suffering. Why disturb the old man and stir up the people? The

cudgels and the running of the gauntlet — all that is long past!

Past? It has changed its form, but it is not past. In every foregoing period there have been things which we remember not only with horror, but with indignation.

We read the descriptions of distraining for debt, burning for heresy, military colonization, whippings and running of the gauntlet, and are not only horror-struck at the cruelty of man, but we fail to imagine the mental state of those who did such things. What was in the soul of the man who could get up in the morning, wash his face and hands, put on the dress of a boyar, say his prayers to God, then go to the torture-chamber to stretch the joints and whip with the knout old men and women, and spend in this business his ordinary five hours, like the modern functionary in the senate; then return to his family and calmly sit down to dinner and finish the day reading the Holy Scripture? What was in the souls of those regimental and company commanders?

I knew such a man, who one evening danced the mazurka with a beautiful girl at a ball, and retired earlier than usual so as to be awake early in the morning to make arrangements to compel a runaway soldier — a Tartar — to be killed in running the gauntlet; and after he had seen this man whipped to death, he returned to his family and ate his dinner! You see all this took place in the time of Peter, and in the time of Alexander, and in the time of Nicholas. There has not been a time when terrible things of this kind have not taken place, which we in reading about them cannot understand. We cannot understand how men could look on such horrors as they perpetrated, and not see the senselessness of them, even if they did not recognize the bestial inhumanity of them. This has been so in all times. Is our day so peculiar, so fortunate, that we have no such horrors, no such doings, which will seem just as ridiculous and incomprehensible to our descendants? There are just such deeds, just such horrors, only we don't see them, as our predecessors did not see those in their day.

To us now, it is clear that the burning of heretics, the

application of torture for eliciting the truth, is not only cruel, but also ridiculous. A child sees the absurdity of it. But the men of those times did not see it so. Sensible, educated men were persuaded that torture was one of the indispensable conditions of the life of man, that it was hard, nay, impossible, to get along without it. So also with corporal punishment, with slavery. And time passed; and now it is hard for us to comprehend the mental state of men in which such a mistake was possible. But this has been in all times because so it had to be, and also in our time, and we must be just as reasonable in regard to the horrors of our day.

Where are our tortures, our slavery, our whippings? It seems to us that we no longer have such things, that they used to be, but have disappeared. This seems to us so because we do not wish to comprehend the old, and we strenuously shut our eyes to it.

But if we look at the past, then our present position is revealed to us and its causes. If we only called bonfires, branding irons, tortures, the scaffold, recruiting stations, by their real names, then we should find also the right name for dungeons, jails, wars, and the general military obligation, and policemen. If we do not say, "Why mention it?" and if we look attentively at what was done in old times, then we should take notice of what is doing now.

If it became clear to us that it was stupid and cruel to cut men's heads off on the scaffold, and to elicit the truth from their lips by means of tearing their joints asunder, then likewise it would be also equally clear to us — if not even more so — that it is stupid and cruel to hang men, or put them into a state of solitary confinement, even worse than death, and to elicit the truth through hired lawyers and judges.

If it becomes clear to us that it is stupid and cruel to kill a man who has made a mistake, then also it will be clear that it is still more stupid to confine such a man in a jail, in order to finish corrupting him; if it is clear that it is stupid and cruel to compel muzhiks into being soldiers and to brand them like cattle, then it will seem

equally stupid and cruel to make every man who has reached the age of twenty-one become a soldier. If it is clear that stupidity and cruelty are the cause of crime, then still clearer will be the stupidity of guards and police.

If we only cease to shut our eyes to the past, saying: "Why recall the past?" it will become clear to us that we have the same horrors, only under new forms.

We say that all this is past, — now we have no tortures, no adulterous Catharines with their powerful lovers, no more slavery, no more whippings to death, and so on, — but how is it in reality? Nine hundred thousand men in prison and under arrest, shut up in narrow, ill-smelling cells, and dying by a slow physical and moral death. Women and children are left without subsistence, and these men are maintained in caverns of corruption, in prisons, and in squads; and only inspectors, having full control of these slaves, get any advantage from this senseless, cruel confinement of them.

Tens of thousands of men with dangerous ideas go into exile, and carry these ideas into the farthest corners of Russia, go out of their minds, and hang themselves. Thousands sit in prisons, and either kill themselves with the connivance of the prison officers, or go mad in solitary confinement. Millions of the people go to rack and ruin physically and morally in the slavery of the factories. Hundreds of thousands of men every autumn leave their families, their young wives, and take lessons in murder, and systematically go to destruction. The Russian Tsar cannot go anywhere without being surrounded by a visible cordon of a hundred thousand soldiers, stationed ninety steps apart all along the road, and a secret cordon following him everywhere.

A king collects tribute and builds a castle, and in the castle he constructs a pond, and on the pond dyed with blue, with a machine which raises a wind, he sails around in a boat; but his people are perishing in factories: this happens in Ireland and in France and in Belgium.

It does not require great penetration to see that in our day it is just the same, and that our day is just as

fecund with horrors, — with the same horrors, with the same tortures, — and that these, in the eyes of succeeding generations, will seem just as marvelous in their cruelty and stupidity. The disease is the same, and the disease is not felt by those that profit by these horrors.

Let them profit for a hundred, for a thousand times more. Let them build their castles, set up their tents, give their balls, let them swindle the people. Let the Nikolaï Palkins whip the people to death, let them shut up hundreds of men secretly in fortresses; only let them do this themselves, so as not to corrupt the people, so as not to deceive them by compelling them to take part in this, as the old soldier was.

This horrible disease lies in the deception: in this fact that for a man there can be any sanctity and any law higher than the sanctity and the law of love to one's neighbor; in the deception, which conceals the fact, that, though a man in carrying out the demands of men may do many bad things, only one kind of thing he ought not to do. He ought never at any one's instigation to go against God, to kill and to torture his brethren.

Eighteen hundred years ago, to the question of the Pharisees, it was said: "*Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's.*"

If there was any faith among men and they recognized any duty to God, then above all they would recognize it as their duty before God to do what God Himself taught man when He said: "*Thou shalt not kill*"; when He said, "*Do not unto others what you would not have others do to you*"; when He said, "*Love thy neighbor as thyself*," saying it not in words only, but writing in ineradicable marks on the heart of every man — love to one's neighbor; mercy, horror of murder and of torture of one's brethren.

If men only believed in God, then they could not help acknowledging this first obligation to Him, not to torture, not to kill, and then the words, "*Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things*

that are God's," would have for them a clear, definite significance.

"To the Tsar or to any one all he wishes," the believing man would say, "but not what is contrary to God."

Cæsar needs my money — take it; my house, my labors — take them; my wife, my children, my life — take them; all these things are not God's. But when Cæsar requires that I apply the rods to my neighbor's back, that is God's affair. My behavior — that is my life for which I must give an account to God; and what God has forbidden me to do that I cannot give to Cæsar. I cannot bind, imprison, whip, kill my fellowmen; all that is my life, and it belongs to God alone, and I may not give it to any one except God.

The words, "*To God the things that are God's*," for us signify whatever they give to God,— kopeks, candles, prayers, in general everything that is unnecessary to any one, much less to God; but everything else; all one's life, all one's soul which belongs to God, they give to Cæsar; in other words, according to the significance of the word *Cæsar* as understood by the Jews — to some entire stranger. This is horrible! Let the people remember this.

THE FEAST OF ENLIGHTENMENT OF JANUARY TWENTY-FOUR

"WHAT can be more horrible than country festivals?" In nothing can the whole barbarism and ugliness of the life of the people be shown with such distinctness as in country festivals. Men live on weekdays; they eat and drink moderately of wholesome food, they labor industriously; they mingle in friendly intercourse. Thus pass weeks, sometimes months, and suddenly this good life is interrupted without any apparent cause. On some special day all simultaneously knock off work, and from noontime on begin to eat rich food to which they are not accustomed; they begin to drink beer and vodka. All drink; the aged compel young men and even children to drink. All congratulate one another, kiss one another, embrace one another, shout, sing songs. Now they are affected to tears, now they boast, now they insult one another, all talk, no one listens; voices are raised, quarrels ensue, sometimes fights. By evening some are staggering, falling prone, and going into a drunken stupor anywhere; others are being led home by those that are still steady enough on their feet, while still others are wallowing and grimacing, filling the air with vile alcoholic fumes.

On the next day all these men sleep off their illness, and when they have somewhat recovered, they again take up their work until the next day of the same kind comes.

What does this mean? Why is it?

Why, it is a festival — a church festival; for one place the Zrameniye,[1] in another the Vvedeniye,[2] in a third the

[1] The Miraculous Appearance of the Virgin Mary.
[2] The Presentation of the Holy Virgin in the Temple.

Kazanskaya. What these terms mean no one knows. They know one thing, that there is an altar and that they must celebrate. And they look forward to this festivity, and after a burdensome life of toil are glad to fall greedily on the food.

Yes, this is one of the very rare expressions of savagery on the part of the working-people. The wine and carousing constitute for them such a temptation that they cannot resist it. The festival comes, and almost every one of them is ready to stupefy himself, and even lose all semblance of human form.

Yes, the people are savage.

But here comes the twenty-fourth of January, and in the newspapers is printed the following notice: —

"The social dinner of the former students of the Imperial Moscow University will take place on the anniversary of its establishment, January 24, at five o'clock in the afternoon, in the restaurant of the Bolshaya Moskovskaya Hotel, at the principal entrance. Tickets for the dinner, at six rubles, may be obtained" .... Then follows a list of places where the tickets may be purchased.

But this is not the only dinner; there will be a dozen others in Moscow, and in Petersburg, and in the provinces. The twenty-fourth of January is the festival of the oldest Russian University, is the festival of Russian enlightenment. The flower of enlightenment celebrates its festival.

It would seem that men standing on the two extreme boundaries of enlightenment — the savage muzhiks and the most cultivated men of Russia — the muzhiks celebrating the "Presentation," or the Virgin of Kazan, and the cultivated men celebrating the festival of enlightenment itself, ought to celebrate their celebrations in an entirely different way. But in reality, it proves that the festival of the most cultivated of men differs in no respect, save in external form, from the festival of the most barbarous of men. The muzhiks seize the church festival without any relation to its meaning, as a pretext for eating and drinking; the enlightened take St. Tatya-

na's Day[1] as a pretext for eating and drinking to repletion, without the least reference to St. Tatyana.

The peasants eat striden'-jelly and vermicelli; the enlightened eat lobsters, cheeses, soups, fillets, and the like: the muzhiks drink beer and vodka; the enlightened drink liquors of various kinds — wines and brandies and liqueurs, dry and strong and sweet and bitter and red and white, and champagne.

The muzhiks' treat costs from twenty kopeks to a ruble; the entertainment of the enlightened comes to anywhere from six to twenty rubles apiece. The muzhiks speak of their love for their godparents, and sing Russian folksongs; the enlightened tell how much they love their *alma mater*, and with entangled tongues sing senseless Latin songs. The muzhiks fall into the mud; and the enlightened sprawl on velvet divans. The muzhiks are carried or led to their places by their wives and sons; the enlightened by lackeys, sober and derisive.

No, in reality this is horrible. It is horrible that men standing, according to their own notion, on the highest degree of human culture, are not able to signalize the festival of enlightenment in any other way than by eating, drinking, smoking, and shouting all manner of nonsense for several hours in succession. It is horrible that elderly men, the guides of the young, help poison them with alcohol — a poison which, like the poison of quicksilver, never entirely disappears, but leaves traces all their lives long. Hundreds and hundreds of young men, egged on by their teachers, have become dead drunk, and been ruined forever and debauched at this festival of enlightenment!

But more horrible than all else is the fact that men who do all this have to such a degree befogged themselves by their conceit, that they can no longer distinguish good from bad, the moral from the immoral. These men have so persuaded themselves that the situation in which they are placed is a situation of enlightenment and culture, and that enlightenment and culture confer the right of indulgence of all their weaknesses,

[1] January 12, O. S.

that they cannot see the beam that is in their eye. These men, who give themselves up to what cannot be called anything else than ugly drunkenness, even in the midst of their ugliness, rejoice in themselves and complain of the unenlightened people.

Every mother suffers — I don't say at the sight of her drunken son, but at the mere thought of such a possibility; every master gets rid of a drunken workman; every unspoiled man is ashamed of himself for having been drunk. All are aware that drunkenness is bad. But here cultured, enlightened men are getting drunk, and they are fully persuaded that in this there is nothing shameful or bad, but that it is very nice, and they laughingly relate the entertaining episodes of their past drunkenness.

It has gone so far that we have the most disgusting orgy, in which old and young get intoxicated together — an orgy annually repeated in the name of enlightenment and culture, and no one is offended, and no one is disturbed; and while they are intoxicated and afterwards, there is great enthusiasm over their elevated feelings and ideas, and they boldly criticize and apprize the morality of other men, and especially of the coarse and unenlightened people.

The muzhik, to a man, will feel that he was to blame if he was drunk, and will ask pardon of every one for his drunkenness. In spite of his temporary fall, he has a lively sense of what is right and wrong. In our society this is beginning to be lost.

Very good, then, you are accustomed to do this and cannot refrain; all right, continue to do so if you cannot restrain yourselves: but understand this only, that on the twenty-fourth or the twenty-seventh or the twenty-ninth of January or February or any other month, this is a vile and shameful thing; and knowing this, give yourselves up to your vicious tendencies, little by little, but do not do so as you are doing it at the present time, triumphantly, confusing and vitiating the young and your so-called youthful confraternity. Do not confuse the young by the teaching that there is any

other civic morality than that founded on self-control, or any other civic immorality than that not founded on self-control.

Every one knows and you know that, before all other civic virtues, continence from vices is necessary; that all intemperance is bad; especially intemperance in the use of wine is the most dangerous, because it kills body and soul. All men know this, and, therefore, before speaking of any elevated feelings and objects, it is requisite for us to free ourselves from the low and savage vice of drunkenness, and not in drunken wise to talk about lofty feelings. So do not deceive yourselves and other men, especially do not deceive the young. The young understand that, by participating in a savage custom upheld by you, they are doing what they ought not to do, and are destroying something very precious and irredeemable.

And you know this — you know that there is nothing better or more important than the purity of soul and body which is destroyed by drunkenness; you know that all your rhetoric with your everlasting *alma mater* does not touch you when you are half-intoxicated, and that you have nothing to offer the young in place of that innocence and purity which they have destroyed by taking part in your orgies.

Therefore, do not prevent them and do not confuse them, but know that, as it was with Noah, as it is with every muzhik, so exactly will it be with every one, shameful, not only to drink so as to shout, to stagger, to leap up on tables and commit all sorts of follies, but shameful also even without any necessity on the occasion of the festival of enlightenment, to eat rich food and obfuscate yourselves with alcohol. Do not lead the young astray, do not by your example pervert them and the servants about you.

Here there are hundreds and hundreds of people serving you, handing you wines and rich foods, taking you home — here are all these people, and live people, before whom, as before all of us, stand the most serious questions of life: is it right, is it wrong? Whose

example shall they follow? Here it is a fine thing that all these lackeys, izvoshchiks, Swisses — Russian men from the country — do not regard you as you regard yourselves, and would wish others to regard you as the representatives of enlightenment. If this were so, they, looking at you, would be disenchanted at every kind of enlightenment and would despise it; but even now, though they do not regard you as the representatives of enlightenment, they nevertheless see in you learned gentlemen who know everything, and, therefore, can and should be followed. And they can put the question to themselves: What will they, poor things, learn from you?

Which is the more powerful: the enlightenment which is spread among the people by public lectures and museums; or the savagery which is sustained and spread among the people by the spectacle of such festivals as the celebration of the twenty-fourth of January, supported by the most enlightened people of Russia?

I think that if all lectures and museums should be done away with, and at the same time all such celebrations and dinners should cease, but the cooks and servant-maids, the izvoshchiks and porters, should spread among themselves in conversations the announcement that all the enlightened men of Russia whom they serve never celebrated their festivals with gluttony and drunkenness, but were able to have good times and dine without wine, then enlightenment would not suffer in the least.

It is time to understand that enlightenment is not spread by a few obscure pictures, nor by verbal and printed words, but by the infectious example of the whole life of the people; and that enlightenment not based on a moral life never was and never will be enlightenment at all, but will always be only obfuscation and perversion.

TO GOD OR MAMMON

"No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one and love the other; or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon." — LUKE xvi. 13.

"He that is not with me is against me, and he that gathers not for me scatters abroad." — MATTHEW xii. 30.

ENORMOUS tracts of the very best lands by which millions of now poverty-stricken families might be supported are devoted to tobacco, vineyards, barley, hemp, and especially rye and potatoes, employed in the production of intoxicating beverages: wine, beer, and mainly brandy.

Millions of laborers who might be making things useful for men are occupied in the production of these things. In England it is estimated that one-tenth of all the laboring men are occupied in the manufacture of brandy and beer.[1]

What are the consequences of the manufacture and consumption of tobacco, wine, vodka, beer?

There is a terrible story about a monk who laid a wager with the devil that he would not admit him into his cell; if he let him in, he agreed to do whatever the devil should order him to do. The story tells how the devil took the form of a wounded raven with its bloody

[1] According to the statistics published by the Imperial Bureau, the consumption of beer in Germany during the year 1897–1898 was 1,383,700,000 gallons, while it was 1,237,000,000 gallons in the United States, 1,192,000,000 gallons in Great Britain, 463,500,000 gallons in Austria-Hungary, 279,000,000 gallons in Belgium, 180,000,000 in France, and a little over 90,000,000 gallons in Russia. The consumption of beer per head of the population is estimated at 36 gallons in Belgium, 32 in Great Britain, 25 in Germany, 21 in Denmark, 12 in Switzerland, 10 in the United States, 9½ in Austria-Hungary, 9 in Holland, 5 in France, 3½ in Norway, 2½ in Sweden, and 1 in Russia. —ED.

wing trailing, and hopped about pitifully at the door of the monk's cell. The monk had compassion on the raven and took him into his cell; and then the devil, having obtained entrance, gave the monk a choice among three crimes: murder, fornication, or drunkenness. The monk chose drunkenness, thinking that if he got intoxicated he would harm only himself. But when the liquor had overcome him, he lost control of his reason, he went to the village and there, yielding to temptation of a woman, he committed adultery with her, and then murder by defending himself from the husband, who returned and attacked him.

Thus are pictured the consequences of drunkenness in the old story, and nowise different in real life are the consequences of the use of intoxicating beverages. It is an unusual burglar or murderer who perpetrates his crime while sober. According to the reports of courts it is seen that nine-tenths of misdemeanors are accomplished when people are tipsy. The most convincing proof that the large number of misdemeanors are traceable to liquor is afforded by the fact that in certain states of America, where wine and the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors are prohibited, crimes have almost ceased. There are no robberies, or thefts, or murders, and the jails are empty.

Such is one consequence of the use of intoxicating drinks.

Another consequence is the harmful influence produced by intoxicating beverages on the health of the people. Besides the fact that from the use of intoxicating drinks arise various painful illnesses peculiar to drunkards, many of whom die of them, it is to be noted that men who drink recuperate from ordinary diseases with greater difficulty than others, so that in life insurance, the insurance companies always prefer the risks on those that do not make use of intoxicating drinks.

This is the second consequence of the use of intoxicating beverages.

The third and most horrible consequence of intoxicating beverages is that liquor darkens the intellect and

conscience of men; from the use of liquor men grow coarser, stupider, and wickeder.

What advantage is there from the use of intoxicating drinks?

None!

The advocates of vodka, wine, beer, assure us in advance that these drinks enhance the health and strength, that they warm and cheer. But now it is indisputably proved that this is not true. Intoxicating beverages do not improve the health, because they contain a violent poison, — alcohol, — and the use of a poison cannot fail to be injurious.

That wine does not increase a man's strength has been proved many times, and by the fact that when the work of a drinking mechanic and of a mechanic who does not drink are compared, during the course of months and years, it is always proved that the non-drinking man does more work and better work than the drinker; and by the fact that in those companies of soldiers which on campaigns use vodka there are always more incapacitated and more stragglers than in those where vodka is not used.

In exactly the same way it has been proved that liquor does not warm, and that the heat felt after drinking liquor does not hold out long, and that the man, after the brief increase in temperature, soon grows colder than ever, so that a drinking man always finds it much harder to endure prolonged cold than a non-drinker. People who freeze to death every year are frozen, for the most part, because they warm themselves with liquor.

It is not necessary to prove also that the gaiety that comes from wine is not real and not a joyous gaiety. Every one knows what sort of thing this drunken gaiety is. All that it requires is to take a look at what is done in cities on holidays, at the drinking-places, and in the rural districts; at what is done on holidays or at weddings and christenings. This drunken gaiety always ends with insulting words, fights, injured members, all kinds of crimes, and the loss of human dignity.

Wine does not conduce to the health or the strength, or the warmth or the gaiety, but only brings great injury to men. And therefore it would seem to be the wise course for every reasonable and decent man, not only not to use intoxicating drinks himself and not to set them before others, but also to try with all his might to stop the common use of this unprofitable and injurious poison.

But unfortunately this is not at all the case. Men are so wedded to old habits and customs, and find it so difficult to do away with them, that there are in our day very many good, kind, and reasonable men who not only do not forswear the use of intoxicating beverages and the regalement of others with them, but even defend it with all their ability. "Wine," they say, "is not to blame, but drunkenness is to be condemned. King David said, 'Wine cheers the heart of man.' Christ in Cana of Galilee sanctified wine. If it were not for the drinking habit government would be deprived of its chief revenue. It is impossible to celebrate a holiday, to hold a wedding, or a christening, without wine. One must drink something at the conclusion of a bargain or a sale, or at the meeting with a dear friend."

"In our poverty and in our labor we must drink," says the poor laboring man.

"If we drink only occasionally and temperately, we do no harm to any one," say well-to-do people.

"The gayety of Russia is in drinking," said Prince Vladimir.

"By our drinking we do no harm to any one but ourselves. And if we harm only ourselves then that is our affair; we don't want to teach any one and we don't want to be taught by any one; we did not begin this and it is not for us to put an end to it," say frivolous people.

Thus talk drinking men of various conditions and ages, trying to justify themselves. But these justifications, which availed some decades of years ago, now no longer avail. It was well enough to say this when all men thought that the use of intoxicating drinks was a harmless pleasure, that intoxicating drinks enhanced a

man's health and strength; when they did not, as yet, know that wine contained a poison always injurious to the health of men; when men did not, as yet, realize the terrible consequences of drunkenness, which are now patent to all eyes.

It was possible to say this when there were not, as yet, these hundreds and thousands of men prematurely dying in cruel torments simply because they had learned to drink intoxicating beverages, and could not, as yet, abstain from the use of them. It was well to say that wine is a harmless pleasure before we had seen those hundreds and thousands of poor tormented women and children suffering because their husbands and fathers had learned to drink wine.

It was well enough to say this before we had witnessed these hundreds and thousands of criminals filling the jails; the exiles, galley-slaves, and ruined women, who had fallen into this condition owing to wine.

It was well enough to say this before we knew that hundreds of thousands of men, who might have lived their lives with delight to themselves and others, have ruined their energies and their intellects and their souls simply because intoxicating beverages existed and they were tempted by them.

And therefore it is no longer possible, in our time, to say that the drinking or non-drinking of wine is a private affair, that we do not consider the moderate use of wine injurious to ourselves, and do not wish to teach any one or be taught by any one, that we did not begin it and it is not for us to end it. It is impossible to say this now; the use of wine or abstinence from it is, in our day, not a private matter, but a public matter.

Now all men — it is all the same whether they wish it or do not wish it — are divided into two camps: those in the one camp are fighting against the employment of a useless poison — intoxicating drinks — both by word and deed, not using wine and not offering it to others; those in the opposite camp uphold both by word and, more powerfully than all else, by force of example the use of this poison, and this contest is going on at the

present time in all nations, and now for twenty years with especial violence in Russia.

"As long as you did not know you were without sin," said Christ. But now we know what we are doing and whom we are serving when we use wine and offer it to others, and consequently, if we, who know the sin of using wine, go on drinking or offering it to others, then we have no justification.

And let not men say that it is impossible to avoid drinking and offering wine on special occasions — on holidays and at weddings and similar occasions; that all do this, that our fathers and grandfathers did this, and therefore it is impossible for us alone to stand out against all the rest.

This is false; our fathers and grandfathers did away with those evil and harmful practices, the ill effects of which became manifest to them; in the same way also we are bound to do away with the evil which has become manifest in our day. And the fact that wine has become a frightful evil in our day is beyond all question.

How, then, if I know that the use of intoxicating drinks is an evil, destroying hundreds of thousands of men, can I offer this evil to my friends who come to my house for a festival, a christening, or a wedding?

Not always was everything as it is now, but everything has changed from worse to better; and the change has come about, not of itself, but by people fulfilling what has been demanded of them by reason and conscience. And now our reason and our conscience in the most actual manner demand of us that we cease drinking wine and offering it to others.

As a general thing men consider worthy of censure and scorn such drunkards as go to taverns and drinking-rooms, and get so full that they lose their reason, and become so addicted to wine that they cannot control themselves, and drink up all they have. The very men who buy wine for home use drink every day and in moderation, and offer wine to their guests in circumstances when it is used — and such men are considered good and honorable and not as doing any harm. And

yet these very people are more worthy of censure than the drunkards. The drunkards have become drunkards simply because those that were not drunkards, those that did themselves no harm, taught them to drink wine, tempted them by their example.

Drunkards never would have become drunkards if they had not seen honored men, men respected by every one, drinking wine and offering it to others. A young man who has never taken wine will know the taste and the effect of wine at festivals, at weddings, at the houses of these honored people who are not themselves drunkards, but who drink and set it before their guests on certain occasions.

And so he who drinks wine, no matter how moderately, or offers it in whatever special circumstances, commits a great sin. He tempts those whom he is commanded not to tempt, of whom it is said, *Woe to him that tempts one of these little ones.*

It is said, "We did not begin it, it is not for us to end it."

It is for us to end it if we only understand that for every one of us the drinking or non-drinking of wine is not a matter of indifference; that with every bottle of wine bought, every glass of wine imbibed, we are serving that terrible devilish deed whereby the best strength of humanity is wasted; but, on the other hand, by refraining from wine for ourselves, and by doing away with the senseless custom of using wine at festivals, weddings, and christenings, we are performing a work of the utmost importance — our soul's work, God's work. As soon as we have understood this, then will drunkenness be stopped by us.

And therefore, my reader, whoever you may be — a young man only just entering upon life, or a grown man who have already established your life, a master of a house or a mistress of a house, or an aged man, — for whom now the time is near for accounting for the deeds you have done, — whether you are rich or poor, famous or unknown, whoever you are, it is impossible for you to stand between these two camps; you must infallibly

choose one of the two: oppose drunkenness or coöperate with it — serve God or mammon.

If you are a young man who have never as yet taken liquor, never as yet been poisoned by the poison of wine, treasure your innocence and freedom from temptation. If you taste, the temptation will be all the harder for you to overcome it. And do not believe that wine will increase your gaiety. At your time of life gaiety is natural, genuine, good gaiety; and wine only changes your true, innocent gaiety into a drunken, senseless, vicious gaiety.

Above all beware of wine, because at your time of life it will be harder for you to resist other temptations; wine weakens in you the force of reason, which is most needful at your age to help you resist temptations. After you have imbibed you will do what you would not think of doing when sober. Why subject yourself to such a terrible risk? If you are a grown man who have already got into the habit of using intoxicating drinks, or who are just beginning to form that habit, make haste while there is yet time to get out of this awful habit, or else before you look around it will get control of you, and you may become like those that are irrevocably drunkards, who have perished by reason of wine. All of them began just as you have. Even if you have the ability throughout your life to use intoxicating drinks in moderation, and may not yourself become a drunkard, yet if you continue to drink wine and serve it at your table, you may perhaps make your younger brother, your wife, your children, drunkards, for they may not have the strength as you have to confine themselves to a moderate use of wine.

And above all understand that on you as a man, who have reached the very prime of life, as the master of the house, as the controller of the destiny of others, rests the responsibility of guiding the lives of your household. And therefore if you know that wine brings no advantage, but causes great evil to men, then not only are you not obliged slavishly to do as your fathers and grandfathers used to do, — to use wine, to buy it and serve it to others, — but, on the

contrary, you are bound to avoid this habit and keep it from others.

And be not afraid that the change in the custom of drinking wine at festivals, christenings, and weddings, will very deeply humiliate or trouble people. In many places they have already begun to do this, substituting for the wine appetizing viands and temperance drinks, and people only at first, and the very stupidest, wonder, but quickly get used to it and approve.

If you are an old man, at an age when you will very shortly be called upon to render your account to God, how you have served Him, and instead of warning the young and inexperienced from wine, the terrible evil of which you must have seen in the course of your life, you have tempted your neighbor by your example, drinking wine and offering it to others, you have been committing a mighty sin.

Woe to the world because of temptations! Temptations must come into the world, but woe to him through whom they come.

Only let us understand that in the matter of using wine there is no half way, and we either desire it or do not desire it — we must choose between two courses — serving God or serving mammon. *He that is not with me is against me, and he that gathers not for me scatters abroad.*[1]

[1] Matthew xii. 30.

1895.

WHY DO PEOPLE STUPEFY THEMSELVES?

I

WHAT is this demand for stupefying things, — vodka, wine, beer, hashish, opium, tobacco, and others less universally used; ether, morphine, mukhomor[1]? Why did it begin and so quickly spread, and why does it still spread among all classes of men, savage and civilized alike? What does it mean that everywhere, if there is not vodka, wine, and beer, there you find opium or hashish, mukhomor, and other things, and tobacco everywhere?

Why must people need stupefy themselves? Ask a man why he began to drink wine and still drinks it, and he will answer you, "Why, it's agreeable, every one drinks," and he will add, "for gayety's sake."

Some who have never once given themselves the trouble of thinking whether it is right or wrong for them to drink wine, will add that wine is wholesome and gives strength; in other words, they will say what has long ago been proved to be incorrect. Ask a smoker why he began to smoke tobacco and still smokes, and he will reply in the same manner, "Why, to cure low spirits; every one smokes."

[1] *Amanita muscaria.* In certain parts of Russia, these mushrooms are eaten dry and swallowed without mastication, thus producing an extended intoxication. Made into a decoction with willow runners or whortleberry, it becomes a social intoxicant, the effects of which are wild exhilaration and often an increase of strength, so that a man under its influence has been known to run miles bearing heavy burdens. It is so powerful that children have been poisoned by the milk of women who had shortly before been under its influence. Its alkaloid is allied to that of hashish or Indian hemp. — ED.

Thus also will probably reply the devotees of opium, hashish, morphine, agaricum.

"Why! to cure low spirits, for gayety's sake, all do it."

But it is just as good as *a cure for low spirits* or for *gayety's sake*, because *all do it*, to twirl one's fingers, to whistle, to sing songs, to play on the dudka, and do other things; in other words, to do anything whatever, for which it is not necessary to squander ancestral wealth or expend great physical powers, to do what does not bring manifest woe on yourself and on others. But for the production of tobacco, wine, hashish, opium, often among settlements needing land, millions and millions of better lands are occupied with crops of rye, potatoes, hemp, poppies, grape-vines, and tobacco, and millions of workmen — in England one-eighth of the whole population — are engaged their whole lives long in the production of these stupefying objects.

Moreover, the use of these things is manifestly injurious, producing terrible evils, known and confessed by every one, causing the destruction of more human beings than have perished in all wars and contagious diseases together.

And men know this; so that it cannot be that this is done to keep men's spirits up, for gayety's sake, simply because all do this.

There must be something else in it. All the time and everywhere you meet with men who love their children, are ready to make all kinds of sacrifices for their well-being, and yet squander on vodka, wine, beer, or spend on opium or hashish, or even on tobacco, enough to feed their suffering and starving children, or, at least, keep them from deprivation. Evidently if a man placed under the necessity of choosing between subjecting his family which he loves to suffering and privation, and refraining from stupefying things, nevertheless chooses the first, he is stimulated to this by something more serious than that every one does it and it is pleasant. Evidently it is not done to raise spirits, or for gayety's sake, but there is some more important reason.

This reason, as far as I can understand it from reading about this subject and observations on other men, and especially on myself when I used to drink wine and smoke tobacco — this reason, according to my observations, is as follows: —

During the period of conscious life a man can frequently detect in himself two separate beings: one blind, physical, and the other gifted with sight, spiritual. The blind animal being eats, drinks, rests, sleeps, propagates, and moves about like a machine wound up; the seeing spiritual being, connected with the animal, itself does nothing, but only estimates the activity of the living being by coinciding with it when it approves of this activity, and by being indignant with it when it does not approve.

This seeing being may be compared to the needle of a compass, which points with one end to the north, with the other in the opposite direction, to the south; and, being protected in its whole extent by a strip, is invisible as long as the thing that carries the needle moves in its direction, but comes out and becomes visible as soon as that which carries the needle turns from the direction indicated.

In exactly the same way the seeing spiritual being, the manifestation whereof in common language we call conscience, always points with one pole toward the right, and with the other, its opposite, toward the wrong, and is not noticed by us until we turn aside from the direction given to us — that is to say, from wrong to right. But it requires to perform some action contrary to the direction of conscience for the consciousness of the spiritual being to appear, showing the deviation of the animal activity from the direction indicated by conscience. And as a sailor could not continue to work with oars, machinery, or sails, if he knew that he was going in the wrong direction, until he gave his course the direction indicated by the needle of the compass, or else hid from himself the deviation; just exactly so every man who is conscious of the duality of his conscience and his animal activity cannot continue this

activity until he either brings it into accordance with his conscience, or conceals from himself the warnings of conscience about the injustice of his animal life.

The whole life of man, we may say, consists only of these two activities: (1) the bringing of one's activity into harmony with conscience; and (2) the concealing from oneself of the indications of conscience so as to be able to continue a certain course of life.

Some do the first, others do the second. For the attainment of the first there is only one means — the moral enlightenment, an increase of light in oneself, and attention to that which the light shines on; for the second — to hide from oneself the monitions of conscience — there are two methods: one external, one internal. The external method consists in occupations which draw the attention away from the monitions of conscience; the internal method consists in darkening conscience itself.

As a man may hide from his eyes any object before him in two ways, by an external turning away of his eyes to something else more striking, and by shutting his eyes; just so a man may hide from himself the monitions of his conscience by a twofold method — the external by diverting his attention with all kinds of occupations, labors, amusements, games; the internal by blinding the organ of attention itself.

For men with an obtuse, limited moral sense, it is often simply sufficient to have external diversions, so as not to perceive the monitions of conscience about their irregular lives. But for men morally keen, such a method is not generally sufficient.

The external methods do not completely divert the attention from the discordance between life and the demands of conscience; this consciousness makes it hard to live, and men in order to be able to live have recourse to an unquestionable inward method of blinding conscience itself, and this consists in poisoning the brain with stupefying things.

Life is not what it should be according to the demands of conscience. One cannot possibly turn one's life into conformity with its demands. The diversions which

might distract from a consciousness of this dissonance are insufficient or they become disgusting, and so as to be in a condition to prolong existence, notwithstanding the monitions of conscience about its irregularities, men temporarily cut short its activity by poisoning that organ through which the monitions of conscience are manifested, just as a man purposely shutting his eyes would hide what he would not wish to see.

II

Not in taste, not in pleasure, not in dissipation, not in gayety, lies the explanation for the universal use of hashish, opium, wine, tobacco, but wholly in the necessity that men have for concealing from themselves the monitions of conscience.

I was going along the street once, and as I passed two izvoshchiks disputing, I heard one say to the other: —

"It's a certain fact, on my conscience as sure as I am sober."

What appeals to a sober man's conscience does not appeal to a drunken man's. In these words was expressed the essential fundamental reason, why men have recourse to stupefying things. Men have recourse to them either so as not to feel the pricking of conscience after committing some act contrary to conscience, or so as to bring themselves into a condition to commit some act which is contrary to conscience, but to which a man's animal nature tempts him.

A sober man has conscientious scruples about going to dissolute women, about stealing, about committing murder. A drunken man has no such scruples; and so, if a man wishes to commit an act which his conscience forbids him to do, he stupefies himself.

I remember being struck by the testimony at court of a cook who had killed a relative of mine, a lady in whose service he had been. He told how when he had sent away his mistress, the chambermaid, and the time had come for him to act, he went with his knife into her

sleeping room, but felt that while he was sober he could not perpetrate the act which he had planned. .... This was "the conscience of a sober man." He went back and drank two glasses of vodka which he had prepared in anticipation of it, and then only did he feel that he was ready, and acted.

Nine-tenths of all crimes are accomplished in that way: "drinking to keep up the courage."

Half of the women that fall, fall through the influence of wine. Almost all visits to houses of ill fame are made by men in a state of drunkenness. Men know the power of wine in drowning out the voice of conscience, and deliberately employ it with that end in view.

Moreover, men stupefy themselves in order to deaden conscience — knowing how wine acts, they, wishing to compel other men to commit some act contrary to their conscience, purposely stupefy them, organize the stupefication of men so as to deprive them of their consciences. In war they always get soldiers drunk when they are to fight hand to hand. All the French soldiers in the assault on Sevastopol were thoroughly drunk.

All of us know of men who have become drunkards in consequence of crimes tormenting their consciences. All can bear witness that men living immoral lives are more inclined than others to the use of stupefying things. Bands of thugs and robbers, prostitutes, never live without wine. All know and acknowledge that the use of stupefying things is in consequence of the reproach of conscience, that in certain immoral professions stupefying things are employed for the deadening of conscience. All know and acknowledge that the use of stupefying things deadens the conscience, that a drunken man is punished for crimes which he would never dare to think of when sober. All are agreed in regard to this: but — strangely enough — when, in consequence of the use of stupefying things, such deeds as theft, murder, violence, and the like do not make their appearance; when stupefying things are taken, not after terrible crimes, but by men of the professions which

are not considered by us as criminal; and when these things are not taken all at once in great quantities, but all the time, in moderation, —then somehow it is supposed that stupefying things do not affect the conscience, deadening it.

Thus it is taken for granted that the drinking by an opulent Russian of a glass of vodka every day before each meal and a glass of wine at each meal, by a Frenchman of his absinthe, by an Englishman of his port and porter, by a German of his beer, and the smoking by a well-to-do Chinaman of his moderate portion of opium, and the smoking of tobacco, are done only for pleasure, and have no influence on the consciences of men.

It is taken for granted that if, after this ordinary stupefying of themselves, men do not commit such crimes as robbery and murder, but only certain stupid and wicked actions, then these actions are spontaneous, and are not produced by the drugging. It is taken for granted that if these men do not commit some capital crime, then they have no reason for deadening their consciences, and that the life which is led by men who are all the time stupefying themselves is a perfectly good life, and would be just the same if these men did not stupefy themselves. It is taken for granted that the constant use of stupefying things does not darken their consciences.

Notwithstanding the fact that every one knows by experience that from the use of wine and tobacco the disposition is changed, and things which without their incitation would have been shameful, cease to be shameful; that after every reproach from conscience, however slight it was then, is such a tendency toward folly that under the influence of stupefying things it is difficult to think of one's life and one's position; and that the constant and moderate use of things that stupefy produces the same physiological effect as the immediate and immoderate use of them, — to men who drink and smoke in moderation it seems that they use stupefying things, not at all for the deadening of their consciences, but merely for their taste and satisfaction.

But it requires only to think about this seriously and dispassionately, without any special pleading, to understand that in the first place, if the use of stupefying things taken in large quantities at a time deadens a man's conscience, then the constant use of these things must produce the same effect, since the stupefying things always act physiologically in the same way — always exciting and then moderating the activity of the brain, whether they be taken in large or in small quantities; and in the second place, that if stupefying things have the power of deadening the conscience, then they have it always, both when under their influence murder, robbery, or violence is perpetrated, and also when under their influence a word is spoken which would not be spoken, when thoughts and feelings would be aroused which without them would not have been aroused. And in the third place, that if the use of stupefying things is necessary for robbers, murderers, and prostitutes to stifle their consciences with, then it is just as necessary for men occupied in professions of which their consciences do not approve, even though these professions are called lawful, and are held in honor by other men. In a word, it is impossible not to understand that the use of stupefying things in large or in small quantities, periodically or constantly, in upper or lower circles, is due to one and the same cause — the need of quieting the voice of conscience so as not to see the discord between life and the demands of conscience.

III

In this only is the reason for the spread of all kinds of stupefying things, and among others of tobacco, perhaps the widest spread and most dangerous of them all.

It is taken for granted that tobacco enlivens and clears the mind, that, like every other habit, it allures to itself, in no case producing that effect of deadening conscience such as is caused by wine. But all it re-

quires is to look more carefully at the conditions in which special temptation to smoke appears, in order to be convinced that the stupefaction caused by tobacco, just the same as that caused by wine, affects the conscience, and that men consciously have recourse to this form of stupefaction, especially when they need it for this object.

If tobacco merely cleared the mind and made men cheerful, then there would not be any of that terrible necessity of using it and especially in certain definite circumstances, and men would not say that they had rather give up bread than their tobacco, and they would not in reality often prefer smoking to eating.

That cook who murdered his baruinya said that, when he went into her bedroom and cut her throat, and she fell back with the death rattle, and the blood spurted out in a torrent, a panic seized him.

"I could not finish the job," he said; "I went from the bedroom into the drawing-room, sat down there, and smoked a cigarette."

Only when he had stupefied himself with tobacco, did he feel sufficiently fortified to return to the bedroom, and finish despatching the old lady, and examine her things.

Evidently the need of smoking at that minute was induced in him, not by the desire to clear or cheer his mind, but by the necessity of drowning something which prevented him from accomplishing the deed he had planned.

Such a definite necessity of stupefying oneself by tobacco in certain very difficult moments will occur to every smoker. I remember that in the days when I smoked I used to feel the special need of tobacco. It was always at moments when I wanted not to remember what I remembered, wanted to forget, wanted not to think.

I am sitting alone, I am doing nothing, I know that I ought to begin my work, and I do not feel like it. I smoke and continue sitting idle.

I promised some one to be at his house at five o'clock

and I have stayed too long. I remember that I am late, but I do not want to remember it, and I smoke. I am annoyed, and I say something disagreeable to a man, and I know that I am doing wrong, and I see that I ought to stop doing so, but I feel an inclination to my bad temper — I smoke, and I continue to be angry.

I am playing cards, and I am losing more than I wanted to hazard — I smoke.

I have placed myself in an awkward position, I have done something wrong, I have made a mistake, and I must recognize my position in order to escape from it, but I do not want to do so — I blame others and smoke! I am writing and am not quite satisfied with what I am writing. I ought to throw it away, but I want to finish writing what I had in mind, and I smoke. I am discussing, and I see that my opponent and I do not understand and cannot understand each other; but I want to express my thoughts to the end, and I go on speaking, and I smoke.

The peculiarity of tobacco, distinguishing it from other stupefying things, besides the faculty which it offers for stupefying and its apparent harmlessness, includes also its portability, so to speak, the possibility of applying it to various minor occasions. To say nothing of the fact that the use of opium, wine, hashish, is coupled with certain accessories which cannot always be had, while one can always take tobacco and paper with one, and that the smoker of opium, the alcohol user, arouses horror, while the man that smokes tobacco presents nothing repulsive; the advantage of tobacco over other intoxicants is that, whereas the intoxication of opium, hashish, or wine is spread over all impressions and acts, received or produced during a sufficiently protracted period of time, the intoxication of tobacco may be directed to every separate occasion.

If you want to do what you ought not to do, you will smoke a cigarette, you will stupefy yourself just as much as is necessary in order to do what ought not to be done, and again you are fresh and can think and speak clearly; for if you feel that you have been doing what you ought

not to have done, again comes the cigarette, and the disagreeable consciousness of the wrong or awkward action is done away with, and you can occupy yourself with other things and forget.

But to say nothing of the frequent occasions when every smoker betakes himself to smoking, not for a gratification of habit and a pastime, but as a means of deadening conscience for actions which have to be performed, or are already performed, — is not the strenuous definite interdependence between men's ways of life and their passion for smoking evident?

When do boys begin to smoke?

Almost always when they lose their childish innocence.

Why do smokers cease to smoke as soon as they come into more moral conditions of life, and begin to smoke as soon as they come into perverted environment? Why do gamblers almost all smoke? Why is it that the women that lead a moral life smoke least of all? Why do prostitutes and madmen *all* smoke?

Habit is habit, but evidently smoking is directly dependent on the need of deadening conscience, and it attains its end. How far smoking deadens the voice of conscience may be observed in the case of almost any smoker. Every smoker, yielding to his passion, either forgets or despises the very first demands of society, such as he claims from others and observes in all other circumstances, as long as his conscience is not smothered by tobacco. Every man of our average education recognizes that it is not proper, polite, or humane for one's own pleasure to disturb the comfort and happiness and still more the health of others. No one permits himself to wet a room where people are sitting, or to make a disturbance or shout, or admit a cold, hot, or fetid atmosphere, or perform actions which disturb or injure others. But out of a thousand smokers not one hesitates to puff out volumes of smoke into a room where women or children that do not smoke are breathing the atmosphere. Even if smokers are accustomed to ask of those present, "Is it disagreeable to you?" — they all

know that the usual reply is, "Oh, we like it!"—notwithstanding the fact that it cannot be pleasant for one not smoking to breathe the vitiated air, and to find stinking cigar-ends in glasses, cups, and plates, on candlesticks or even in ash-trays.

But even if grown-up non-smokers endure tobacco, at least for children, of whom no one asks permission, it cannot possibly be agreeable or advantageous. But, meantime, respectable people, humane in all the other relations of life, smoke in the presence of children, at dinners, in little rooms, vitiating the atmosphere with tobacco smoke, and not feeling the slightest pricking of conscience because they do so.

It is generally said, and I used to say, that smoking conduces to intellectual labor. And undoubtedly this is so, if one considers only the amount of intellectual labor. It seems to a man who smokes, and therefore ceases to value and weigh his thought, it seems as if many thoughts suddenly occurred to him. But it is not at all that many thoughts have occurred, but only that he has lost control of his thoughts.

When a man is working he is always conscious of two beings in himself; the one working, the other estimating the work. The stricter the estimate the slower and the better the work, and *vice versa*. If the one that estimates finds himself under the influence of an intoxication, then there will be more of the work, but its quality will be worse. "If I do not smoke, I cannot write. If I do not drink, I begin, but I cannot go on."

This is commonly said, and I used to say so. What does it mean? Either that you have nothing to write, or else that what you wish to write is not yet sufficiently matured in your inner consciousness, but is only confusedly beginning to present itself to you, and the estimating critic dwelling in you, not being stupefied by tobacco, tells you so. If you did not smoke you would put aside what you had begun, and await the time when what you had in mind became clear to you, you would try to think out what had dimly presented itself to you, you would consider the objections that

arose, and you would direct your whole attention to clarifying your thought.

But you smoke, and the critic who has his seat within you becomes stupefied, and the obstacle in your work is removed. What seemed to you insignificant when you were unintoxicated with tobacco again acquires importance; what seemed to you obscure, no longer seems so; the obstacles rising before you are concealed, and you continue to write, and you write much and rapidly.

IV

"But," it is frequently said, "may not a slight brief change, like the mild exhilaration produced by a moderate use of wine and tobacco, bring about some significant results? It is comprehensible that if a man smokes opium, hashish, or drinks so much wine as to fall and lose his senses, the consequences of such a stupefying of himself may be very grave; but that a man should come under the exceedingly mild effects of alcoholic exhilaration or tobacco could never have any serious consequences."

It seems to people that a slight intoxication, a slight darkening of consciousness, can never produce a serious effect. But to think so is the same as to think that it may be injurious to a watch to strike it against a stone, but that to put an obstacle in its works cannot harm it.

You see the chief work which moves the whole life of a man proceeds not in the motion of arms and legs, the physical powers, but in the consciousness. In order for a man to accomplish something with his arms and legs, he must first undergo a certain change in his consciousness. And this change determines all the man's subsequent acts. These changes are always brief, almost unnoticeable. Brüllof was correcting an *étude* for a pupil. The pupil, glancing at the changes that had been made, said: —

"Here you have scarcely touched the *étude*, but it is entirely changed."

Brüllof answered: —

"Art begins where scarcely begins."

This observation is strikingly true, not in relation to art alone, but to all of life. It may be said that a true life begins where "scarcely" begins, where the scarcely perceptible, almost infinitely small, changes take place. The true life is produced, not where the great externals are effectuated, where men move about, jostle one another, struggle, and fight, but it is produced where the scarcely differentiated changes are accomplished.

The true life of Raskolnikof[1] was not accomplished when he killed the old money-lender and her sister. While he was killing the old woman, and especially her sister, he was not living his true life, but was acting like a machine, doing what he could not help doing, discharging the cartridge with which he had long ago been loaded. One old woman lay killed, the other was before him there; the ax was in his hand.

The true life of Raskolnikof was not proceeding at the time when he met the old woman's sister, but at the time when he had not as yet killed even the old woman herself, had not yet entered another person's room with murder in view, had not taken the ax in his hand, had not the noose under his cloak on which he hung it, before he had ever thought of the old woman; but it was while he was lying on the divan in his own room, not even thinking of the old woman or even whether he could or could not at the will of another man wipe from the face of the earth a useless and dangerous person, but was deciding whether it was suitable or not for him to live in Petersburg, whether it was suitable or not for him to take money from his mother, and other questions not at all affecting the old woman. And here at that time, in the animal kingdom, entirely independent of the reality, were decided the questions whether he should or should not kill the old money-lender. These questions were decided, not when he, having killed one old woman, stood with his ax before the second, but at the

[1] The hero of Dostayevsky's most famous novel, "Crime and Punishment." — ED.

time when he had not yet acted, but was only thinking, when his conscience alone was working, and in this conscience scarcely perceptible changes were taking place.

Now there is often needed the greatest clearness of mind, especially important for the regular decision of a question, and a single glass of wine, a single cigarette smoked, may prevent the decision of the question, may turn this question, may stifle the voice of conscience, may make the decision of the question, to the profit of the lower animal nature as was the case with Raskolnikof.

The changes are imperceptible, and from them come the most enormous and awful consequences. From what happens when a man has decided and begun to act, great material changes may ensue: houses, property, men's bodies, may be destroyed, but nothing can happen greater than what was hidden in the man's conscience. The limits of what may come forth are given to conscience.

But from the scarcely perceptible changes which take place in the domain of the conscience may proceed consequences utterly beyond the power of the imagination to show their importance, and wholly beyond limits.

Let it not be thought that what I say has anything in common with questions of free will or determinism.

Discussions about these subjects are superfluous for my purpose or for any other. Without deciding the question whether a man may or may not act as he wishes — a question, in my opinion, wrongly stated — I only say that, as human activity is determined by scarcely perceptible changes in the conscience, then — it being all one, whether you do or do not recognize the so-called freedom of the will — one must be especially attentive to the state in which these almost imperceptible changes appear, as it is necessary to be especially attentive to the condition of the weights by means of which we weigh objects.

We must, as far as in us lies, try to place ourselves and others in such conditions that the clearness and delicacy of the thoughts necessary for the regular work of the conscience may not be disturbed, and not to do the

opposite by trying to make this work of the conscience more difficult and troublesome by the use of stupefying things.

A man is both a spiritual and an animal being. A man may be moved, by influencing only his spiritual nature, and may be moved by influencing his animal nature, just as a watch may be moved by a hand and by a main wheel. And just as, in a watch, it is more convenient to regulate its movement by an internal mechanism, so a man — you yourself or any one else — is more conveniently guided by his conscience. And as in watches it is necessary more than all to observe that by which the central mechanism is more conveniently moved, so in the case of a man it is more than all necessary to observe purity, clearness of conscience, whereby it is more convenient to move a man. It is impossible to doubt this, and all men know it. But the necessity arises for men to stupefy themselves. Men are not so desirous of their consciences working regularly as for it to seem to them that what they are doing is regular, and they deliberately employ such means as prevent the regular work of the conscience.

V

Men drink and smoke, not to keep their spirits up, not for gaiety's sake, not because it is pleasant, but in order to stifle conscience in themselves. And if this is so, then how terrible must be the consequences. In fact, just think what kind of a building men would build if they did not have a straight rule whereby to lay the walls, or a rectangular rule whereby to square the corners, but a soft rule which would give at all the irregularities of the wall, and a square which would bend out and in for every acute and obtuse angle!

But now by means of this self-stupefaction this very thing is done in life. Life does not fit conscience — conscience is made to yield to life. This is done in the case of individual lives, it is done also in the life of all humanity which is made up of individual lives.

In order to comprehend the full significance of such a stupefying of conscience, let any man remember carefully his spiritual state at every period of his life. Every man finds that at every period of his life before him stood certain moral questions which he has had to decide, and from the decision of which depended all the welfare of his life. For the decision of such questions great stress of attention was required. This stress of attention constitutes labor. In every labor, especially at its commencement, there is a period when the labor seems difficult, painful, but human weakness suggests the desire to shirk it. Physical labor is painful at first; still more so is intellectual labor.

As Lessing says, men have the quality of ceasing to think when thinking begins to present difficulties, and especially so, I add, when thinking begins to be fruitful. A man feels that the decision of questions facing him demands strenuous, often painful, labor, and he wants to get rid of it. If there were not internal means of stupefaction, he could not drive away from his consciousness these insistent questions, and willy-nilly he would be compelled to decide them.

Now the man knows the means of ridding himself of them whenever they present themselves, and he employs them. As soon as the questions presenting themselves for solution begin to torment him, he betakes himself to these means, and saves himself from the discomfort caused by the disturbing questions. The consciousness ceases to demand their decision, and the undecided questions remain undecided until the next period of enlightenment. But at the next period of enlightenment the same thing repeats itself, and a man for months, for years, sometimes his life long, continues to face the same moral problems, having never advanced one step toward their solution. And meantime on the decision of these moral questions the whole movement of life depends.

Something occurs analogous to what a man would do, who, needing to see the bottom through turbid water, in order to reach a precious pearl, and not liking to go

into the water, should deliberately roil the water as soon as it began to settle and become transparent. Often for a whole lifetime a man who has stupefied himself stands motionless on the same, once adopted, obscure, contradictory system of philosophy, each time the period of enlightenment approaches, beating against the same wall on which he had beaten ten, twenty years before, and finding it impossible to break through it, because he had deliberately blunted the keenness of his thoughts whereby only he could break through it. Let any one remember how he was at the epoch when he smoked and drank, and let him verify the same thing in others, and he will see one constant line of demarcation separating men who stupefy themselves from men who are free from the habit; the more a man stupefies himself, the more immovable he is morally.

VI

The effects on individuals of opium and hashish, as described for us by them, are horrible; horrible for the drunkard are the consequences of the use of alcohol, as we well know; but incomparably more horrible for society in general are the consequences of taking brandy, wine, and tobacco, though the majority of men, and especially the so-called classes of our world, use them in moderation, and consider them harmless.

The consequences must necessarily be horrible if it be granted, as one must grant, that the dominant activity of society — political, official, scientific, literary, artistic — is largely carried on by men who find themselves in an abnormal condition — by intoxicated persons.

It is ordinarily taken for granted that a man who, like the majority of the people in our well-to-do classes, uses alcoholic stimulants every time he takes food, finds himself the next day, when he goes to work, in a perfectly normal and sober state. But this is absolutely false. The man who in the evening drinks a bottle of wine, a glass of vodka, or two tankards of ale, finds him-

self in the customary condition of headachiness or depression which follows exhilaration, and therefore in a condition of intellectual debasement, which is still further increased by smoking.

For a man who constantly smokes and drinks in moderation to bring his brain into a normal condition, he must go for a week, or even more, without drinking or smoking,[1] and this rarely happens.

Thus the large part of all that is produced in our world, both by men that direct and teach others and by those directed and taught, is accomplished in a non-sober condition.

Now do not let this be taken as a jest or as an exaggeration — the ugliness, and above all the senselessness, of our lives proceed, primarily, from the constant condition of intoxication in which the majority of men find themselves. How would it be possible for men not intoxicated calmly to do all that is done in our world, from the Eiffel tower to the general war debt?

Without the slightest necessity a society is formed; capital is paid in, men work, enter into calculations, form plans; millions of work-days, millions of puds of iron, are consumed in building a tower; and millions of men consider it their duty to climb up the tower, stay there a while, and go down again; and the construction and

[1] But why are men that do not drink or smoke often found on an intellectual and moral plane incomparably lower than men that drink and smoke? And why is it that men that drink and smoke often display the very highest intellectual and moral qualities?

The answer to this is: first, we do not know the height to which smokers and drinkers might attain if they did not smoke and drink. From the fact that men of strong moral fiber, though they submit to the degrading influences of stupefying things, nevertheless produce great works, we may merely conclude that they would produce still greater ones if they did not stupefy themselves. It is very evident, as an acquaintance of mine said to me, that the works of Kant would not have been written in such a strange and execrable style if he had not smoked so much.

In the second place, we must not forget that the lower a man stands intellectually and morally, the less he is sensible of the discord between conscience and life, and therefore the less he feels the necessity of self-stupefaction; and therefore it so often happens that the most sensitive natures — those that are painfully conscious of the discord between life and conscience — fall under the influence of narcotics, and are destroyed by them. — AUTHOR'S NOTE.

the visiting of this tower arouses in men's minds no criticism upon it, but only a desire to build still more tall towers. Could sober people have done such a thing?

Or again: All the European nations have been occupied for decades in devising the very best means of destroying human life, and in training all their young men that had reached mature growth how to commit murder. All know that there is no danger of a descent of barbarians, that these preparations for murder are meant by Christian and civilized nations against one another, all know that this is burdensome, painful, inconvenient, wasteful, immoral, blasphemous, and senseless — and yet all prepare for mutual murder: some, inventing political combinations as to who shall be allied with whom, and who shall be killed; others taking the command of these prospective murderers; still others submitting against their will, against the dictates of their conscience, against reason, to these murderous preparations.

Could sober men do this?

Only intoxicated men, not knowing a sober moment, could do such things, and live in such a horrible state of discord between life and conscience, as the men of our day live, not only in this, but in all other respects.

Never, it seems to me, have men lived in such evident contradiction between the demands of conscience and their acts.

The humanity of our time is, as it were, fastened to something. It is as if some external cause prevented it from taking that position which is natural to it according to its conscience. And this cause — if not the only one, at least the principal one — is the physical condition of stupefaction in which, by wine or tobacco, the immense majority of the men of our time bring themselves.

Emancipation from this terrible evil will be an epoch in the life of humanity, and this epoch is apparently at hand. The evil is recognized. The change in conscience in relation to the use of stupefying things has already taken place; men have recognized their terrible harm-

fulness and begin to point them out, and this imperceptible change in the conscience inevitably brings with it the emancipation of men from the use of stupefying things. The emancipation of men from stupefying things opens their eyes to the demands of their consciences, and they begin to lead lives in accordance with conscience.

And this is apparently beginning to take place. And, as always, it begins with the upper classes, when all the lower classes are already infected.

CHURCH AND STATE

WHAT an extraordinary thing it is! There are people who seem ready to climb out of their skins for the sake of making others accept this, and not that, form of revelation. They cannot rest till others have accepted their form of revelation, and no other. They anathematize, persecute, and kill whom they can of the dissentients. Other groups of people do the same — anathematize, persecute, and kill whom they can of the dissentients. And others again do the same. So that they are all anathematizing, persecuting, and killing — demanding that every one should believe as they do. And it results that there are hundreds of sects all anathematizing, persecuting, and killing one another.

At first I was astonished that such an obvious absurdity — such an evident contradiction — did not destroy religion itself. How can religious people remain so deluded? And really, viewed from the general, external point of view it is incomprehensible, and proves irrefragably that every religion is a fraud, and that the whole thing is superstition, as the dominant philosophy of today declares. And looking at things from this general point of view, I inevitably came to acknowledge that all religion is a human fraud. But I could not help pausing at the reflection that the very absurdity and obviousness of the fraud, and the fact that nevertheless all humanity yields to it, indicates that this fraud must rest on some basis that is not fraudulent. Otherwise we could not let it deceive us — it is too stupid. The very fact that all of mankind that really lives a human life yields to this fraud, obliged me to acknowledge the importance

of the phenomena on which the fraud is based. And in consequence of this reflection, I began to analyze the Christian teaching, which, for all Christendom, supplies the basis of this fraud.

That is what was apparent from the general point of view. But from the individual point of view — which shows us that each man (and I myself) must, in order to live, always have a religion show him the meaning of life — the fact that violence is employed in questions of religion is yet more amazing in its absurdity.

Indeed how can it, and why should it, concern any one to make somebody else, not merely have the same religion as himself, but also profess it in the same way as he does? A man lives, and must, therefore, know why he lives. He has established his relation to God; he knows the very truth of truths, and I know the very truth of truths. Our expression may differ; the essence must be the same — we are both of us men.

Then why should I — what can induce me to — oblige any one or demand of any one absolutely to express his truth as I express it?

I cannot compel a man to alter his religion either by violence or by cunning or by fraud — false miracles.

His religion is his life. How can I take from him his religion and give him another? It is like taking out his heart and putting another in its place. I can only do that if his religion and mine are words, and are not what gives him life; if it is a wart and not a heart. Such a thing is impossible also, because no man can deceive or compel another to believe what he does not believe; for if a man has adjusted his relation toward God and knows that religion is the relation in which man stands toward God he cannot desire to define another man's relation to God by means of force or fraud. That is impossible, but yet it is being done, and has been done everywhere and always. That is to say, it can never really be done, because it is in itself impossible; but something has been done, and is being done, that looks very much like it. What has been, and is being done, is that some people

impose on others a counterfeit of religion and others accept this counterfeit — this sham religion.

Religion cannot be forced and cannot be accepted for the sake of anything, force, fraud, or profit. Therefore what is so accepted is not religion but a fraud. And this religious fraud is a long-established condition of man's life.

In what does this fraud consist, and on what is it based? What induces the deceivers to produce it? and what makes it plausible to the deceived? I will not discuss the same phenomena in Brahminism, Buddhism, Confucianism, and Mohammedanism, though any one who has read about those religions may see that the case has been the same in them as in Christianity; but I will speak only of the latter — it being the religion known, necessary, and dear to us. In Christianity, the whole fraud is built up on the fantastic conception of a Church; a conception founded on nothing, and which as soon as we begin to study Christianity amazes us by its unexpected and useless absurdity.

Of all the godless ideas and words there is none more godless than that of a Church. There is no idea which has produced more evil, none more inimical to Christ's teaching, than the idea of a Church.

In reality the word *ekklesia* means an assembly and nothing more, and it is so used in the Gospels. In the language of all modern nations the word *ekklesia* (or the equivalent word "church") means a house for prayer. Beyond that, the word has not progressed in any language, — notwithstanding the fifteen hundred years' existence of the Church-fraud. According to the definition given to the word by priests (to whom the Church-fraud is necessary) it amounts to nothing else than a preface which says: "All that I am going to say is true, and if you disbelieve I shall burn you, or denounce you, and do you all manner of harm." This conception is a sophistry, needed for certain dialectical purposes, and it has remained the possession of those to whom it is necessary. Among the people, and not only among common people, but also in society, among educated people, no

such conception is held at all, even though it is taught in the catechisms. Strange as it seems to examine this definition, one has to do so because so many people proclaim it seriously as something important, though it is absolutely false. When people say that the Church is an assembly of the true believers, nothing is really said (leaving aside the fantastic inclusion of the dead); for if I assert that the choir is an assembly of all true musicians, I have elucidated nothing unless I say what I mean by true musicians. In theology we learn that true believers are those who follow the teaching of the Church, *i.e.* belong to the Church.

Not to dwell on the fact that there are hundreds of such true Churches, this definition tells us nothing, and at first seems as useless as the definition of "choir" as the assembly of true musicians. But then we catch sight of the fox's tail. The Church is true, and it is one, and in it are pastors and flocks, and the pastors, ordained by God, teach this true and only religion. So that it amounts to saying: "By God, all that we are going to say, is all real truth." That is all. The whole fraud lies in that, — in the word and idea of a Church. And the meaning of the fraud is merely that there are people who are beside themselves with desire to teach their religion to other people.

And why are they so anxious to teach their religion to other people? If they had a real religion they would know that religion is the understanding of life, the relation each man establishes to God, and that consequently you cannot teach a religion, but only a counterfeit of religion. But they want to teach. What for? The simplest reply would be that the priest wants rolls and eggs, and the archbishop wants a palace, fish-pies, and a silk cassock. But this reply is insufficient. Such is no doubt the inner, psychological motive for the deception, — that which maintains the fraud. But as it would be insufficient, when asking why one man (an executioner) consents to kill another against whom he feels no anger, — to say that the executioner kills because he thereby gets bread and

brandy and a red shirt, so it is insufficient to say that the metropolitan of Kief with his monks stuffs sacks with straw[1] and calls them relics of the saints, merely to get thirty thousand rubles a year income. The one act and the other is too terrible and too revolting to human nature for so simple and rude an explanation to be sufficient. Both the executioner and the metropolitan explaining their actions would have a whole series of arguments based chiefly on historical tradition. Men must be executed; executions have gone on since the world commenced. If I don't do it another will. I hope, by God's grace, to do it better than another would. So also the metropolitan would say: External worship is necessary; since the commencement of the world the relics of the saints have been worshiped. People respect the relics in the Kief Catacombs and pilgrims come here; I, by God's grace, hope to make the most pious use of the money thus blasphemously obtained.

To understand the religious fraud it is necessary to go to its source and origin.

We are speaking about what we know of Christianity. Turn to the commencement of Christian doctrine in the Gospels and we find a teaching which plainly excludes the external worship of God, condemning it; and which, with special clearness, positively repudiates mastership. But from the time of Christ onward we find a deviation from these principles laid down by Christ. This deviation begins from the times of the Apostles and especially from that hankerer after mastership — Paul. And the farther Christianity goes the more it deviates, and the more it adopts the methods of external worship and mastership which Christ had so definitely condemned. But in the early times of Christianity the conception of a Church was only employed to refer to all those who shared the beliefs which I consider true.

[1] The celebrated Catacombs of the Kief Monastery draw crowds of pilgrims to worship the relics of the saints. It is said that a fire once broke out in one of the chapels, and that those who hastened to save the "incorruptible body" of one of the saints discovered that the precious

That conception of the Church is quite correct if it does not include those that make a verbal expression of religion instead of its expression in the whole of life — for religion cannot be expressed in words.

The idea of a true Church was also used as an argument against dissenters. But till the time of the Emperor Constantine and the Council of Nicæa, the Church was only an idea.

Since the Emperor Constantine and the Council of Nicæa the Church becomes a reality, and a fraudulent reality, — that fraud of metropolitans with relics, and priests with the eucharist, Iberian Mothers of God,[1] synods, etc., which so astonish and horrify us, and which are so odious that they cannot be explained merely by the avarice of those that perpetuate them. The fraud is ancient, and was not begun merely for the profit of private individuals. No one would be such a monster of iniquity as to be the first to perpetrate it, if that were the only reason. The reasons which caused the thing to be done were evil: "By their fruits ye shall know them." The root was evil — hatred, pride, enmity against Arius and others; and another yet greater evil, the alliance of Christianity with power. Power, personified in the Emperor Constantine, who, in the heathen conception of things, stood at the summit of human greatness (he was enrolled among the gods), accepts Christianity, gives an example to all the people, converts the people, lends a helping hand against the heretics, and by means of the Ecumenical Council establishes the one true Christian religion.

The Catholic Christian religion was established for all time. It was so natural to yield to this deception that, to the present day, there are people who believe in the saving efficacy of that assembly. Yet that was the moment when a majority of Christians abandoned their religion. At that turning the great

relic was merely a bag stuffed with straw. This is only a specimen of many similar tales, some of which are true and others invented. — Tr.

[1] The Iberian Mother of God is the most celebrated of the miraculous *ikons* in Moscow. — Tr.

majority of Christians entered the heathen path, which they have followed ever since. Charlemagne and Vladimir[1] continued in the same direction.

And the Church fraud continues till now. The fraud consists in this: that the conversion of the powers-that-be to Christianity is necessary for those that understand the letter, but not the spirit, of Christianity; but the acceptance of Christianity without the abandonment of power is a satire on, and a perversion of, Christianity.

The sanctification of political power by Christianity is blasphemy; it is the negation of Christianity.

After fifteen hundred years of this blasphemous alliance of pseudo-Christianity with the State, it needs a strong effort to free oneself from all the complex sophistries by which, always and everywhere (to please the authorities), the sanctity and righteousness of State-power, and the possibility of its being Christian, has been pleaded.

In truth, the words a "Christian State" resemble the words "hot ice." The thing is either not a State using violence, or it is not Christian.

In order to understand this clearly we must forget all those fantastic notions in which we have been carefully brought up, and must ask plainly, what is the purpose of such historical and juridical science as has been taught us? Such sciences have no sound basis; their purpose is merely to supply a vindication for the use of violence.

Omitting the history of the Persians, the Medes, etc., let us take the history of that government which first formed an alliance with Christianity.

A robbers' nest existed at Rome. It grew by robbery, violence, murders, and it subdued nations. These robbers and their descendants, led by their chieftains (whom they sometimes called Cæsar, sometimes Augustus), robbed and tormented nations to satisfy their de-

[1] Vladimir adopted Christianity A.D. 988. Many inhabitants of his capital city, Kief, were disinclined to follow his example, so he "acted vigorously" (as a Russian historian remarks), *i.e.* he had the people driven into the Dniepr to be baptized. In other parts of his dominions Christianity was spread among the unwilling heathen population "by fire and sword." — TR.

sires. One of the descendants of these robber-chiefs, Constantine (a reader of books and a man satiated by an evil life), preferred certain Christian dogmas to those of the old creeds: instead of offering human sacrifices he preferred the mass; instead of the worship of Apollo, Venus, and Zeus, he preferred that of a single God with a son — Christ. So he decreed that this religion should be introduced among those that were under his power.

No one said to him: "The kings exercise authority among the nations, but among you it shall not be so. Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not lay up riches, judge not, condemn not, resist not him that is evil."

But they said to him: "You wish to be called a Christian and to continue to be the chieftain of the robbers, — to kill, burn, fight, lust, execute, and live in luxury? That can all be arranged."

And they arranged a Christianity for him, and arranged it very smoothly, better even than could have been expected. They foresaw that, reading the Gospels, it might occur to him that all this (*i.e.* a Christian life) is demanded — and not the building of temples or worshiping in them. This they foresaw, and they carefully devised such a Christianity for him as would let him continue to live his old heathen life unembarrassed. On the one hand Christ, God's Son, only came to bring salvation to him and to everybody. Christ having died, Constantine can live as he likes. More even than that, — one may repent and swallow a little bit of bread and some wine, and that will bring salvation, and all will be forgiven.

But more even than that: they sanctify his robber-chieftainship, and say that it proceeds from God, and they anoint him with holy oil. And he, on his side, arranges for them the congress of priests that they wish for, and orders them to say what each man's relation to God should be, and orders every one to repeat what they say.

And they all started repeating it, and were contented,

and now this same religion has existed for fifteen hundred years, and other robber-chiefs have adopted it, and they have all been lubricated with holy oil, and they were all, all ordained by God. If any scoundrel robs every one and slays many people, they will oil him, and he will then be from God. In Russia, Catharine II., the adulteress who killed her husband, was from God; so, in France, was Napoleon.

To balance matters the priests are not only from God, but are almost gods, because the Holy Ghost sits inside them as well as inside the Pope, and in our Synod with its commandant-officials.

And as soon as one of the anointed robber-chiefs wishes his own and another folk to begin slaying each other, the priests immediately prepare some holy water, sprinkle a cross (which Christ bore and on which he died because he repudiated such robbers), take the cross and bless the robber-chief in his work of slaughtering, hanging, and destroying.[1]

And it all might have been well if only they had been able to agree about it, and the anointed had not begun to call each other robbers, which is what they really are, and the people had not begun to listen to them and to cease to believe either in anointed people or in depositaries of the Holy Ghost, and had not learned from them to call them as they call each other, by their right names, *i.e.* robbers and deceivers.

But we have only spoken of the robbers incidentally, because it was they who led the deceivers astray. It is the deceivers, the pseudo-Christians, that we have to consider. They became such by their alliance with the robbers. It could not be otherwise. They turned from the road when they consecrated the first ruler and assured him that he, by his power, could help religion — the religion of humility, self-sacrifice, and the endurance of evil. All the history, not of the imaginary, but of the real, Church, *i.e.* of the priests under

[1] In England the holy water is not used, but an archbishop draws up a form of prayer for the success of the queen's army, and a chaplain is appointed to each regiment to teach the men Christianity. — Tr.

the sway of kings, is a series of useless efforts of these unfortunate priests to preserve the truth of the teaching while preaching it by falsehood, and while abandoning it in practice. The importance of the priesthood depends entirely on the teaching it wishes to spread; that teaching speaks of humility, self-sacrifice, love, poverty; but it is preached by violence and wrong-doing.

In order that the priesthood should have something to teach and that they should have disciples, they cannot get rid of the teaching. But in order to whitewash themselves and justify their immoral alliance with power, they have, by all the cunningest devices possible, to conceal the essence of the teaching, and for this purpose they have to shift the center of gravity from what is essential in the teaching to what is external. And this is what is done by the priesthood — this is the source of the sham religion taught by the Church. The source is the alliance of the priests (calling themselves the Church) with the powers-that-be, *i.e.* with violence. The source of their desire to teach a religion to others lies in the fact that true religion exposes them, and they want to replace true religion by a fictitious religion arranged to justify their deeds.

True religion may exist anywhere except where it is evidently false, *i.e.* violent; it cannot be a State religion.

True religion may exist in all the so-called sects and heresies, only it surely cannot exist where it is joined to a State using violence. Curiously enough the names "Orthodox-Greek," "Catholic," or "Protestant" religion, as those words are commonly used, mean nothing but "religion allied to power," — State religion and therefore false religion.

The idea of a Church as a union of many — of the majority — in one belief and in nearness to the source of the teaching, was in the first two centuries of Christianity merely one feeble external argument in favor of the correctness of certain views. Paul said, "I know from Christ Himself." Another said, "I know from Luke." And all said, "We think rightly, and the proof that we

are right is that we are a big assembly, *ekklesia*, the Church." But only beginning with the Council of Nicæa, organized by an emperor, does the Church become a plain and tangible fraud practised by some of the people who professed this religion.

They began to say, "It has pleased us and the Holy Ghost." The "Church" no longer meant merely a part of a weak argument, it meant *power* in the hands of certain people. It allied itself with the rulers, and began to act like the rulers. And all that united itself with power and submitted to power, ceased to be a religion and became a fraud.

What does Christianity teach, understanding it as the teaching of any or of all the churches?

Examine it as you will, compound it or divide it, — the Christian teaching always falls with two sharply separated parts. There is the teaching of dogmas: from the divine Son, the Holy Ghost, and the relationship of these persons, — to the eucharist with or without wine, and with leavened or with unleavened bread; and there is the moral teaching: of humility, freedom from covetousness, purity of mind and body, forgiveness, freedom from bondage, peacefulness. Much as the doctors of the Church have labored to mix these two sides of the teachings, they have never mingled, but like oil and water have always remained apart in larger or smaller circles.

The difference of the two sides of the teaching is clear to every one, and all can see the fruits of the one and of the other in the life of men, and by these fruits can conclude which side is the more important, and (if one may use the comparative form) more true. One looks at the history of Christendom from this aspect, and one is horror-struck. Without exception, from the very beginning and to the very end, till to-day, look where one will, examine what dogma you like, — from the dogma of the divinity of Christ, to the manner of making the sign of the cross,[1] and to the question of

[1] One of the main points of divergence between the "Old-believers" and the "Orthodox" Russian church was whether in making the sign of the cross two fingers or three should be extended. — Tr.

serving the communion with or without wine, — the fruit of mental labors to explain the dogmas has always been envy, hatred, executions, banishments, slaughter of women and children, burnings and tortures. Look on the other side, the moral teaching from the going into the wilderness to commune with God, to the practice of supplying food to those who are in prison; the fruits of it are all our conceptions of goodness, all that is joyful, comforting, and that serves as a beacon to us in history. ....

People before whose eyes the fruits of the one and other side of Christianity were not yet evident, might be misled and could hardly help being misled. And people might be misled who were sincerely drawn into disputes about dogmas, not noticing that by such disputes they were serving not God but the devil, not noticing that Christ said plainly that He came to destroy all dogmas; those also might be led astray who had inherited a traditional belief in the importance of these dogmas, and had received such a perverse mental training that they could not see their mistake; and again, those ignorant people might be led astray to whom these dogmas seemed nothing but words or fantastic notions. But we to whom the simple meaning of the Gospels — repudiating all dogmas — is evident, we before whose eyes are the fruits of these dogmas in history, cannot be so misled. History is for us a means — even a mechanical means — of verifying the teaching.

Is the dogma of the Immaculate Conception necessary or not? What has come of it? Hatred, abuse, irony. And did it bring any benefit? None at all.

Was the teaching that the adulteress should not be sentenced necessary or not? What has come of it? Thousands and thousands of times people have been softened by that recollection.

Again, does everybody agree about any one of the dogmas? No. Do people agree that it is good to give to him that has need? Yes, all agree.

But the one side, the dogmas — about which every one

disagrees, and which no one requires — is what the priesthood gave out, and still gives out, under the name of religion; while the other side, about which all can agree, and which is necessary to all, and which saves people, is the side which the priesthood, though they have not dared to reject it, have also not dared to set forth as a teaching, for that teaching repudiates them.

Religion is the meaning we give to our lives, it is that which gives strength and direction to our life. Every one that lives finds such a meaning, and lives on the basis of that meaning. If man finds no meaning in life, he dies. In this search man uses all that the previous efforts of humanity have supplied. And what humanity has reached we call revelation. Revelation is what helps man to understand the meaning of life.

Such is the relation in which man stands toward religion.

NOTE BY THE TRANSLATOR

This article is prohibited in Russia, and, though written several years ago, has never been printed in Russian.

I once asked Tolstoï about this article, in which it seemed to me that the truth was told somewhat roughly and even harshly. He explained that it was a rough draft of an article he had planned but had not brought into satisfactory shape. After it had been put aside for some time, in favor of other work, a friend borrowed it and took a copy, and it began to circulate from hand to hand in written or hectographed form. Tolstoï does not regret the publicity thus obtained for the article, as it expresses something which he feels to be true and important.

A translation, made probably from an incorrect copy, or from the French, has already appeared in English, but a retranslation is not the less wanted on that account. A little book, professing to be by Count L. Tolstoï, and entitled "Vicious Pleasures" (a title Tolstoï never used) was published in London some years ago. It consisted of translations, or perhaps I should rather say parodies, of five essays by Tolstoï. But, to borrow from Macaulay, they were translated much as Bottom was in "Midsummer Night's Dream" when he had an ass's head on. In many places it is impossible to make out what the essays mean. One does not even know whether it is the Church or the State, or both, that are "Vicious Pleasures."

The translator evidently had some qualms of conscience, for he concludes his preface with the words: "If fault be found with the present translator for the manner in which he has reproduced Count

Tolstoï's work in English, he would ask his critics to remember that he too, like Kant, dearly loves his pipe."

If that be really the explanation of the quality of the work, — "Vicious Pleasures" should be of value to the anti-tobacco league — as a fearful warning. Excepting for that purpose I doubt whether it can be of use to any one.

The present version will, I hope, be found intelligible by those who approach it with an open mind.

HOW TO READ THE GOSPELS

THERE is so much that is strange, improbable, unintelligible, and even contradictory in what professes to be Christ's teaching that people do not know how to understand it.

It is very differently understood by different people. Some say redemption is the all-important matter. Others say the all-important thing is grace, obtainable through the sacraments. Others, again, say that submission to the Church is what is really essential. But the Churches themselves disagree, and interpret the teaching variously. The Roman Catholic Church holds that the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son; that the Pope is infallible, and that salvation is obtainable chiefly through works. The Lutheran Church does not accept this, and considers that faith is what is chiefly needed for salvation. The Orthodox Russo-Greek Church considers that the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father only, and that both works and faith are necessary to salvation.

And the Anglican and other Episcopalian, the Presbyterian, the Methodist, not to mention hundreds of other Churches, interpret Christ's teaching each in its own way.

Young men, and men of the people, doubting the truth of the Church-teaching in which they have been brought up, often come to me and ask what *my* teaching is, and how *I* understand Christ's teaching? Such questions always grieve, and even shock me.

Christ, who the Churches say was God, came on earth to reveal divine truth to men, for their guidance in life. A man — even a plain, stupid man — if he wants to

give people guidance of importance to them, will manage to impart it so that they can make out what he means. And is it possible that God, having come on earth especially to save people, was not able to say what He wanted to say clearly enough to prevent people from misinterpreting His words, and from disagreeing with one another about them?

This could not be so if Christ were God; nor even if Christ were not God, but merely a great teacher, is it possible that He failed to express Himself clearly. For a great teacher is great, just because he is able to express the truth so that it can neither be hidden nor obscured, but is as plain as daylight.

In either case, therefore, the Gospels which transmit Christ's teaching must contain truth. And, indeed, the truth is there for all who will read the Gospels with a sincere wish to know the truth, without prejudice, and, above all, without supposing that the Gospels contain some special sort of wisdom beyond human reason.

That is how I read the Gospels, and I found in them truth plain enough for little children to understand, as, indeed, the Gospels themselves say. So that when I am asked what *my* teaching consists in, and how *I* understand Christ's teaching, I reply: I have no teaching, but I understand Christ's teaching as it is explained in the Gospels. If I have written books about Christ's teaching, I have done so only to show the falseness of the interpretations given by the commentators on the Gospels.

To understand Christ's real teaching the chief thing is not to interpret the Gospels, but to understand them as they are written. And, therefore, to the question how Christ's teaching should be understood, I reply: If you wish to understand it, read the Gospels. Read them putting aside all foregone conclusions; read with the sole desire to understand what is said there. But just because the Gospels are holy books, read them considerately, reasonably, and with discernment, and not at haphazard or mechanically, as if all the words were of equal weight.

To understand any book one must choose out the parts that are quite clear, dividing them from what is obscure or confused. And from what is clear we must form our idea of the drift and spirit of the whole work. Then, on the basis of what we have understood, we may proceed to make out what is confused or not quite intelligible. That is how we read all kinds of books. And it is particularly necessary thus to read the Gospels, which have passed through such a multiplicity of compilations, translations, and transcriptions, and were composed, eighteen centuries ago, by men who were not highly educated, and were superstitious.[1]

Therefore, in order to understand the Gospels, we must first of all separate what is quite simple and intelligible from what is confused and unintelligible, and afterward read this clear and intelligible part several times over, trying fully to assimilate it. Then, helped by the comprehension of the general meaning, we can try to explain to ourselves the drift of the parts which seemed involved and obscure. That was how I read the Gospels, and the meaning of Christ's teachings became so clear to me that it was impossible to have any doubts about it. And I advise every one who wishes to understand the true meaning of Christ's teaching to follow the same plan.

Let each man when reading the Gospels select all that seems to him quite plain, clear, and comprehensible, and let him score it on the margin, say with a blue pencil, and then, taking the marked passages first, let him separate Christ's words from those of the Evan-

[1] The Gospels, as is known to all who have studied their origin, far from being infallible expressions of divine truth, are the work of innumerable minds and hands, and are full of errors. Therefore the Gospels can in no case be taken as a production of the Holy Ghost, as Churchmen assert. Were that so, God would have revealed the Gospel as he is said to have revealed the commandments on Mount Sinai; or he would have transmitted the complete book to men, as the Mormons declare was the case with their holy scriptures. But we know how these works were written and collected, and how they were corrected and translated; and therefore not only can we not accept them as infallible revelations, but we must, if we respect truth, correct errors that we find in them.—AUTHOR'S NOTE.

gelists by marking Christ's words a second time with, say, a red pencil. Then let him read over these doubly scored passages several times. Only after he has thoroughly assimilated these, let him again read the other words attributed to Christ, which he did not understand when he first read them, and let him score, in red, those that have become plain to him. Let him leave unscored such words of Christ as remain quite unintelligible, and also unintelligible words by the writers of the Gospels. The passages marked in red will supply the reader with the essence of Christ's teaching. They will give what all men need, and what Christ therefore said, in a way which all can understand. The places marked only in blue will give what the authors of the Gospels said that is intelligible.

Very likely in selecting what is, from what is not, fully comprehensible, people will not all mark the same passages. What is comprehensible to me may seem obscure to another. But all will certainly agree in what is most important, and there are things which will be found quite intelligible to every one.

It is just this — just what is fully comprehensible to all men — that constitutes the essence of Christ's teaching.[1]

[1] This little article — advising men how to read the Gospels most profitably — is, of course, not allowed to be published in Russia. Hectographed and photographed copies do, however, circulate from hand to hand. — Tr.

REASON AND RELIGION

TO those who ask my opinion whether it be desirable to endeavor by the aid of reason to attain complete consciousness in one's inner spiritual life, and to express the truths thus attained in definite language, I would answer positively in the affirmative, that every man, in order to achieve his destiny on earth, and to attain true welfare, — the two are synonymous, — must continually exert all his mental faculties to solve for himself and clearly to express the religious foundations on which he lives — that is, the meaning of his life.

I have often found among illiterate laborers who have to deal with cubic measurements an accepted conviction that mathematical calculations are fallacious, and not to be trusted. Whether it arise from their ignorance of arithmetic, or from the fact that those responsible for the calculations have often cheated them, with or without intent, the conviction that mathematics is unreliable and worthless for purposes of measurement has taken root amongst illiterate workmen, and become for the majority of them an unquestioned fact.

The similar opinion has obtained amongst men, — I will boldly say, lacking in true religious feelings, — that reason is unequal to the solution of religious questions, that the application of reason to such questions is the most fruitful source of error, and that the solution of such questions by the aid of reason is sinful pride.

I mention this because the doubt expressed in the question whether it be needful to strive for distinct consciousness in one's religious convictions may be merely the outcome of the belief that reason cannot be applied to the solution of religious questions.

Man has been given by God one single instrument to

attain knowledge of self and of one's relation to the universe; there is no other, and that one is reason.

Yet he is informed that he may use his reason to solve questions, whether domestic, family, commercial, political, scientific, artistic, but not for the elucidation of the problem for which especially it was given him; and that for the solution of the most important truths, of those on an acquaintance with which hangs all his life, man must on no account employ his reason, but must acquiesce in their truth independently of his reason, whereas, independently of reason, man cannot be conscious of anything.

It is said, Accept the truth by revelation, by faith; but a man cannot believe independently of reason. If a man believes this and not that, it is only because his reason tells him that this is credible, and that is not. To affirm that a man must not be guided by reason is equivalent to telling a man who has lost his way in dark catacombs that, in order to find his way out, he must extinguish his lamp, and be guided, not by light, but by something else.

But it may be objected that not every one is endowed with intellect and a special capacity for expressing his thoughts, and that, in consequence, an inadequate expression of these thoughts may lead to error.

To this I would apply the words of the Gospel, — that "things hid from the wise and prudent have been revealed unto babes." And this statement is neither an exaggeration nor a paradox, as people are accustomed to view such passages in the Gospels as do not please them, but is an assertion of the simplest and most indubitable truth that unto everything in the universe is given a law which this being must follow, and that to enable each to recognize this law every one is endowed with corresponding organs. Thus every man is endowed with reason, and to the reason of every man is disclosed the law which he must follow. This law is concealed only from those who do not wish to follow it, and who, in order to avoid it, cast reason aside, and instead of using it to become acquainted with truth, accept upon

trust the assertions of those who, like them, have surrendered reason.

Yet the law which men should follow is so plain that it is accessible to every child, the more so as no man has to discover anew the law of his life. Those who have lived before him have discovered and expressed it, and he has but to verify it with his reason, and to accept or refuse those propositions which he finds expressed in tradition; that is, not, as recommended by those who would shirk the law, by verifying reason by tradition, but, on the contrary, by verifying tradition by reason.

Traditions may proceed from men, and be false; but reason indubitably comes from God, and cannot be false. Hence for the recognition and expression of truth no special extraordinary capacity is required; one has but to believe that reason is not only the loftiest sacred capacity of man, but moreover is the sole instrument for the understanding of truth.

Particular intellectual qualities are needful, not for the acquirement and expression of truth, but for the concoction and expression of error. Having once deviated from the directions of reason, distrusting it, and believing what others proclaimed as the truth, men accumulate and accept by faith — for the most part in the form of laws, revelations, dogmas — such intricate, unnatural, and contradictory propositions, that, in order to express them and adapt them to life, great acuteness of mind and special qualities are indeed required.

Only imagine a man of our world, educated on the religious basis of any of the Christian confessions, — Catholic, Greek-Orthodox, Protestant, — who wished to elucidate for himself and adapt to his life the religious fundamental ideas with which he has been inoculated in childhood! What an involved mental labor he must face in order to reconcile all the contradictions included in the faith he has imbibed from his youth.

A righteous God has created evil, persecutes men, demands redemption, and so forth; and we, confessing the law of love and mercy, make war, rob the poor, etc.

In order to disentangle these impossible contradic-

tions, or rather in order to conceal them from oneself, much mental capacity and special talent is indeed necessary; but in order to learn the law of one's life, or, as already expressed, to bring one's faith into complete consciousness, no special mental capacity is required; one has but to refuse to admit anything contrary to reason, not to deny reason, religiously to guard one's reason, and to rely on it alone.

If the meaning of life is obscure to any one, one must not therefore conclude that reason is unequal to elucidating that meaning, but merely that too much of what is unreasonable has been admitted upon faith, and that everything uncorroborated by reason must be set aside.

Hence my answer to the question, whether one should try to attain complete consciousness in one's inner spiritual life, is, that this is precisely the most needful and important business of our lives. Most needful and important, because the only reasonable conception of life is the accomplishment of the will of Him who sent us into the world — that is, the will of God. And His will is revealed to us, not by any extraordinary miracle, nor by the divine finger inscribing it on stone, nor by the Holy Ghost composing an infallible book, nor by the infallibility of any special holy person or collection of persons, but by the working of the reason of all men, who pass on to each other by word and deed the truths which are ever becoming more evident to their consciousness.

This knowledge never has been, and never will be, complete, but augments continually as the life of mankind advances. The longer we live the more clearly and fully do we learn the will of God, and in consequence what we must do to fulfil it.

Therefore, I am firmly convinced that the elucidation and verbal expression (which is an unmistakable token of clearness of idea) of all religious truth accessible to him by every man, however small he may think himself or others may consider him — the least being essentially the greatest — are of the most sacred and most essential duties of man.

FIRST RECOLLECTIONS

FROM UNPUBLISHED AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL MEMORANDA

HERE are my first recollections (which I cannot reduce to order, not knowing what came first, what afterward, while of some I know not whether they were dreams or reality). But here they are.

I am tied down; I want to raise my arms, but I cannot do it, and I wail and weep and my cry is disagreeable to myself; but I cannot stop. It must be that some one stands bending over me, but I don't remember who. And all this takes place in a semi-darkness. But I remember that there are two. My crying has an effect on them, they are alarmed at my cry, but they do not unloose me as I wish, and I cry louder than ever. It seems to them necessary (that is, that I be tied down), while I know that it is not necessary, and I want to prove it to them, and I burst out into a cry disgusting to myself but unrestrainable.

I am conscious of the injustice and cruelty, not of people, because they pity me, but of fate, and feel pity for myself. I do not know and never shall learn what this was: whether they swaddled me when I was a suckling and I pulled out my hands; or whether they swaddled me when I was more than a year old so that I might not scratch the tetter; or whether I have gathered many impressions into one as happens in dreams, — but apparently this was my first and most powerful impression of life. And it was not my crying or my suffering that I retain in my recollection, but the complication, the contradiction, of the impression. I wanted freedom;

it would not disturb any one, and I who needed the strength was weak while they were strong.

The second impression was pleasurable. I am sitting in a tub, and I am surrounded by a new and disagreeable odor of some object by which my small body is galled. Apparently this was bran, and apparently in the water and in the trough, but the novelty of the impression made by the bran awakened me, and I for the first time noticed and observed my little body, with the ribs plainly outlined, and the smooth, dark tub, and the nurse with her arms tucked up, and the dark, warm, threatening water, and the swash of it, and especially the feeling of smoothness of the wet edges of the tub when I put my little hands on it. Strange and terrible to think that from my birth up to my third year, all the time while I was nursing, while I was weaned, when I was beginning to creep, to walk, to speak, however I rack my memory, I can find no impression except these two.

When did I begin? When did I begin to live? And why is it pleasant to imagine myself as I was then, but it used to be terrible to me, as now it is terrible to many, to imagine myself as I shall be when I again enter into that condition of death from which there will be no recollections expressible in words? Was I not alive when I was learning to look, to hear, to understand, to talk, when I slept, when I pressed my lips to my mother's breast, and laughed and rejoiced my mother? I was alive and blissfully alive. Did I not then get all that whereby I live now, and get in such abundance, and so rapidly, that in all the rest of my life I have not got a hundredth part so much?

From a five-year-old child to me is only a step. From the new-born baby to the five-year-old child there is a terrible gap. From the embryo to the new-born baby there is an abyss. And from non-existence to the embryo there is not an abyss, but incomprehensibility. Moreover space and time and cause are forms of thought and the existence of life outside of these forms, but all our life is a continually increasing subjection to these forms and then again emancipation from them.

The following recollections of mine refer to my fourth and fifth years, but even of these there are very few, and not one of these refers to life outside of the walls of my home.

Nature up to the age of five does not exist for me. All that I remember refers to bed and chamber. No grass, no leaves, no sky, no sun exist for me. It cannot be that they did not let me play with the flowers and leaves, or see the grass, that they did not protect me from the sun, but up to five years, up to six years, there is not one recollection of what we call Nature. Apparently it is necessary to go away from her in order to see her, and I was Nature!

The recollection that comes after that of the tub is that of *Yeremeyevna*. "Yeremeyevna" was a word with which they used to frighten us children. And apparently they began early to frighten us with it, but my recollection of it is as follows:—

I am in my little bed and feeling good and happy as always, and I should not remember this but suddenly my nurse, or some one of those that constituted my life, says something in a voice entirely new to me, and goes out, and I begin to feel a sensation of terror besides that of gaiety. And I remember that I am not alone, but some one is there with me very much the same as I.

This must have been my sister Mashenka, a year younger than I, for our beds stood in one room together.

And I remember that there is a canopy over my bed, and my sister and I used to share our pleasures and terrors — whatever unexpected thing happened to us — and I used to hide in the pillow, and I would hide and peek out to look at the door from which I expected anything new and gay. And we used to laugh and hide and be full of expectations. And here comes some one in a gown and head-dress such as I had never seen before, but I know that it is the person who is always with me — a nurse or auntie, I don't know which, and this some one speaks in a deep voice which I recognize, and says something terrible about naughty children, and about

Yeremeyevna! I squeal with terror and delight, and I am terrified, and at the same time delighted because I am terrified, and I wish that the one who frightened me did not know that I know her! We become silent, but soon again we begin to whisper on purpose to bring back Yeremeyevna.

Similar to the recollection of Yeremeyevna is another, apparently later in time because it is more distinct, but it always remains incomprehensible to me. In this remembrance the chief rôle is played by a German, Feodor Ivanovitch, our teacher; but I know assuredly that I was not as yet under his supervision, consequently this must have taken place before I was five. And this is my first impression of Feodor Ivanovitch. And it happens so early that I do not remember any one — my brothers, nor my father, nor any one. If I have an idea of any person whatever besides, it is only of my sister, and solely because she and I were associated in terror of Yeremeyevna.

With this recollection is connected also my first conception that our house had an upper story. How I got there, whether I went there by myself or who took me there, I do not remember at all; I only remember that there were several of us, we all took hold of hands in a khorovod; among those holding one another by the hand were several strange women, — because I recollect that these were the laundry girls, — and we all began to turn and spring, and Feodor Ivanovitch capered about, lifting his legs very high and making a terrible noise and thumping, and I had a consciousness that this was not the right thing to do, that it was bad, and I noticed him and I seemed to burst out crying, and it all came to an end.

This is all I remember up to my fifth year. I remember nothing of my nurses, my aunties, my brothers, my sisters, or of my father, or my rooms, or my toys — nothing at all. My recollections grow more definite from the time when I was taken down to Feodor Ivanovitch and to the older boys.

When I was taken down to Feodor Ivanovitch and

the other boys, I experienced, for the first time, and therefore more strongly than ever again, the feeling called the sense of duty, called the sense of the cross, which every man is called upon to wear. I felt sorry to leave what I had grown accustomed to — accustomed to from eternity! — I felt melancholy, poetically melancholy to leave, not so much the people, my sister, my nurse, my aunt, as the bed, the canopy, the pillows; and the new life into which I had entered was terrible to me. I tried to find something cheerful in the new life which was before me; I tried to credit the flattering speeches with which Feodor Ivanovitch allured me to himself. I tried not to see the scorn with which the boys received me, their younger brother; I tried to think that it was disgraceful for a big boy to live with girls, and that there was nothing good in the up-stair life with the nurse; but in the depths of my soul I was terribly homesick, and I knew that I had irrevocably lost my innocence and joy, and only a feeling of personal dignity, a consciousness that I was doing my duty, sustained me.

Many times since in life it has been my fortune to undergo such moments at the dividing of the ways, where new paths opened out before me. I experienced a gentle grief at the irrevocableness of what was lost. And still I did not believe that it would be. Though they told me that I was to be taken down to the boys, I remember that my khalat with its belt, sewed to the back, which they put on me, seemed to separate me forever from the upper rooms, and I now, for the first time, noticed others besides those with whom I had lived up-stairs, but the chief personage was the one at whose house I was living and whom I do not remember before. This was my Aunt T—— A——.[1] I remember her as short, stout, with black hair, kind, affectionate, gentle. She put on me my khalat, tightened the belt and fastened it, kissed me, and I saw that she was experiencing the same feelings as I was, that she was sorry, awfully sorry, but it had to be.

[1] Probably Tatyana Aleksandreyevna Eyelskaya.

For the first time I realized that life is not play, but hard work. Not otherwise shall I feel when I come to die; I shall discover that death or the future life is not play, but hard work.

May 17, 1878.

THE DEMANDS OF LOVE

AN EXTRACT FROM TOLSTOÏ'S DIARY

YESTERDAY, 24th June, 1893, I thought:—
Let us imagine people of the affluent class (for clearness' sake say a man and a woman: husband and wife, brother and sister, father and daughter, or mother and son) who have vividly realized the sin of a luxurious and idle life, lived amidst people crushed by work and want. They have left the town; have handed over to others (or in some way rid themselves of) their superfluities; have left themselves stocks and shares yielding, say, £15 a year for the two of them (or have even left themselves nothing), and are earning their living by some craft, say, *e.g.*, by painting on china or translating first-rate books, and are living in the country, in a Russian village.

Having hired or bought themselves a hut, they cultivate their plot of ground or garden, look after their bees, and at the same time give medical assistance (as far as their knowledge allows) to the villagers, teach the children, and write letters and petitions for their neighbors, etc.

One would think no kind of life could be better. But this life will be hell, or will become hell, if these people are not hypocrites and do not lie, *i.e.* if they are really sincere.

If these people have renounced the advantages and pleasures of life which town and money gave them, they have done so only because they acknowledge men to be brothers — equals before their Father. Not equals in

ability, or, if you please, in worth; but equals in their right to life, and to all that life can give.

It may be possible to doubt the equality of people when we look at adults, each with a different past, but doubt becomes impossible when we see children. Why should this boy have watchful care and all the assistance knowledge can give to assist his physical and mental development, while that other charming child, of equal or better promise, is to become rickety, crippled, or dwarfed from lack of milk, and to grow up illiterate, wild, hampered by superstitions, a man representing merely so much brute labor-power?

Surely, if people have left town life, and have settled, as these have, to live in the village, it is only because they, not in words only, but in very truth, believe in the brotherhood of man, and intend, if not to realize it, at least to begin realizing it in their lives. And just this attempt to realize it must, if they are sincere, inevitably bring them to a terrible position.

With their habits (formed from childhood upwards) of order, comfort, and especially of cleanliness, they, on moving to the village, after buying or hiring a hut, cleared it of insects, perhaps even papered it themselves, and installed some remains, not luxurious but necessary, of their furniture, say an iron bedstead, a cupboard, and a writing-table. And so they begin living. At first the folk shun them, expecting them (like other rich people) to defend their advantages by force, and therefore do not approach them with requests and demands. But presently, bit by bit, the disposition of the newcomers gets known; they themselves offer disinterested services, and the boldest and most impudent of the villagers find out practically that these newcomers do not refuse to give, and that one can get something out of them.

Thereupon, all kinds of demands on them begin to spring up, and constantly increase.

A process begins comparable to the subsidence and running down to a level of the grains in a heap. They settle down till there is no longer any heap rising above the average level.

Besides the begging, natural demands to divide up what they have more than others possess make themselves heard, and, apart from these demands, the new settlers themselves, being always in close touch with the village folk, feel the inevitable necessity of giving from their superfluity to those who are in extreme poverty. And not only do they feel the need of giving away their superfluity until they have only as much left as each one (say as the average man) ought to have; there is no possible definition of this "average" — no way of measuring the amount which each one should have; there is no stopping, for crying want is always around them, and they have a surplus compared to this destitution.

It seems necessary to keep a glass of milk; but Matrena has two unweaned babies, who can find no milk in their mother's breast, and a two-year-old child which is on the verge of starving. They might keep a pillow and a blanket, so as to sleep as usual after a busy day; but a sick man is lying on a coat full of lice, and freezes at night, being covered only with bark-matting. They would have kept tea and food, but had to give it to some old pilgrims who were exhausted. At least it seemed right to keep the house clean, but beggar-boys came and were allowed to spend the night, and again lice bred, after one had just got rid of those picked up during a visit to the sick man.

Where and how can one stop? Only those will find a point to stop at who are either strangers to that feeling of the reality of the brotherhood of men which has brought these people to the village, or who are so accustomed to lie that they no longer notice the difference between truth and falsehood. The fact is, no point of stoppage exists; and if such a limit be found, it only proves that the feeling which prompted these people's act was imaginary or feigned.

I continue to imagine these people's life.

Having worked all day, they return home; having no longer a bed or a pillow, they sleep on some straw they have collected, and after a supper of bread they

lie down to sleep. It is autumn. Rain is falling, mixed with snow. Some one knocks at the door. Should they open it? A man enters wet and feverish. What must they do? Let him have the dry straw? There is no more dry, so either they must drive away the sick man, or let him, wet as he is, lie on the floor, or give him the straw, and themselves (since one must sleep) share it with him.

But this is still not all: a man comes who is a drunkard and a debauchee, whom you have helped several times, and who has always drunk whatever you gave him.

He comes now, his jaw trembling, and asks for six shillings to replace money he has stolen and drunk, for which he will be imprisoned, if he does not replace it. You say you only have eight shillings, which you want for a payment due to-morrow. Then the man says: "Yes, I see, you talk, but when it comes to acts, you're like the rest; you let the man you call a 'brother' perish, rather than suffer yourselves!"

How is one to act in such cases? Let the fever-stricken man have the damp floor and lie in the dry place oneself, —and you will be farther from sleep than the other way. If you put him on your straw and lie near him, you will get lice and typhus. If you give the beggar six of your last shillings, you will be left without bread to-morrow; but to refuse means, as he said, to turn from that for the sake of which one lives.

If you can stop here, why could you not stop sooner? Why need you help people? Why give up your property and leave the town? Where can one draw the line? If there is a limit to the work you are doing, then it all has no meaning, or it has only the horrible meaning of hypocrisy.

How is one to act? What is one to do? Not to draw back means to lose one's life, to be eaten by lice, to starve, to die, and — apparently — uselessly. To stop is to repudiate that for the sake of which one has acted, for which one has done whatever of good one has accomplished. And one cannot repudiate it, for it is no inven-

tion of mine, or of Christ's, that we are brothers and must serve one another; it is real fact, and when it has once entered, you cannot tear that consciousness out of the heart of man. How is one to act? Is there no escape?

Let us imagine that these people, not dismayed by the necessity of sacrifice which brought them to a position inevitably leading to death, decided that the position arose from their having come to help the villagers with means too scanty for the work, and that the result would have been different, and they would have done great good, had they possessed more money. Let us imagine that they find resources, collect immense sums of money, and begin to help. Within a few weeks the same thing will repeat itself. Very soon all their means, however great they may be, will have flowed into the pits formed by poverty, and the position will be the same as before.

But perhaps there is a third way? Some people say there is, and that it consists in assisting the enlightenment of the masses, and that this will destroy inequality.

But this path is too evidently hypocritical; you cannot enlighten a population which is constantly on the verge of perishing from want. And, moreover, the insincerity of people who preach this is evident from the fact that a man eager for the realization of equality (even through science) could not live a life the whole structure of which supported inequality.

But there is yet a fourth way: that of aiding the destruction of the causes which produce inequality — aiding in the destruction of *force* which produces it.

And that way of escape must occur to all sincere people who try in their lives to carry into effect their consciousness of the brotherhood of man.

The people I have pictured to myself would say: "If we cannot live here among these people in the village; if we are placed in the terrible position that we must necessarily starve, be eaten by lice, and die a slow death, or repudiate the sole moral basis of our lives, this is because some people store up accumulations of wealth while others are destitute; this inequality is based on

force; and therefore, since the root of the matter is force, we must contend against force!"

Only by the destruction of force, and of the slavery which results from force, can a service of man become possible which will not necessarily lead to the sacrifice of life itself.

But how is force to be destroyed? Where is it? It is in the soldiers, in the police, in magistrates, and in the lock which fastens my door. How can I strive against it? Where, and in what?

We even find people, revolutionists, who strive against force, while they depend altogether on force to maintain their own lives — fighting force by force.

But for a sincere man this is not possible. To fight force by force means merely to replace the old violence by a new one. To help by "culture," founded on force, is to do the same. To collect money, obtained by violence, and to use it in aid of people impoverished by force, means to heal by violence wounds inflicted by violence.

Even in the case I imagined: not to admit a sick man to my hut and to my bed, and not to give six shillings because I can, by force, retain them, is also to use force. Therefore, in our society, the struggle against force does not, for him who would live in brotherhood, eliminate the necessity of yielding up his life, of being eaten by lice and dying, while at the same time always striving against violence; preaching non-resistance, exposing violence, and above all giving an example of non-resistance and of self-sacrifice.

Dreadful and difficult as is the position of a man living the Christian life, amidst lives of violence, he has no path but that of struggle and sacrifice — and sacrifice till the end.

One must realize the gulf that separates the lousy, famished millions from the overfed people who trim their dresses with lace; and to fill it up we need sacrifices, and not the hypocrisy with which we now try to hide from ourselves the depth of the gulf.

A man may lack the strength to throw himself into

the gulf, but it cannot be escaped by any man who seeks after life. We may be unwilling to go into it, but let us be honest about it, and say so, and not deceive ourselves with hypocritical pretences.

And, after all, the gulf is not so terrible. Or, if it is terrible, yet the horrors which await us in a worldly way of life are more terrible still.

News reached us lately, correct or not (for in such cases people are apt to exaggerate), that Admiral Tryon for honor's sake (the "honor" of a fleet designed for murder) declined to save himself and persisted like a hero (like a fool rather) with his ship.

There is less danger of death from lice, infection, or want after giving away one's last crust to help others, than there is of being killed at the manœuvers or in war.

Lice, black bread, and want seem so terrible. But the bottom of the pit of want is not so deep after all, and we are often like the boy who clung by his hands in terror all night to the edge of the well into which he had stumbled, fearing the depth and the water he supposed to be there, while a foot below him was the dry bottom. Yet we must not trust to that bottom, we must go forward prepared to die. Only *that* is real love, which knows no limit to sacrifices — even unto death.

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

Tolstoï keeps a diary in which he notes down what he has been thinking. Much of this diary is hastily written and unsatisfactory to Tolstoï himself, so that he frequently inserts such remarks as: "these thoughts are confused and need restating," or "this is nonsense," etc. But the diary contains much that is valuable, and Tolstoï has yielded to a friend's request to be allowed to make extracts for publication. "The Demands of Love" is a good example of one of the longest and most finished passages.

On a first perusal this extract has a depressing effect on most readers. But is it not true that, looking at the matter objectively — as a problem outside ourselves — we can imagine no position in which one would be justified in stopping and refusing to go farther along the path of self-abnegation? Judged by the demands of love we are all sinners, even the best must say: "Why callest thou me good? none is good, save one, even God."

Considering the matter subjectively, as a question of personal conduct, surely we may, however, walk the path of progress, humbly confessing our sins and shortcomings. It is right to continue to move toward a perfection we shall not reach here.

Viewing other aspects of life, Tolstoï would be one of the last to denounce as "hypocritical" the feeble efforts of imperfect men to live better than before. "The bruised reed he would not break, the smoking flax he would not quench." But here he is showing how the evils of our social state rest on the use of violence between man and man, and that the struggle to right this wrong calls for absolute self-sacrifice, even unto death. To be contented with what we have attained to and to stagnate is never right.

THREE PARABLES

I

PARABLE THE FIRST

A WEED had spread over a beautiful meadow. And in order to get rid of it the tenants of the meadow mowed it, but the weed only increased in consequence. And now the kind, wise master came to visit the tenants of the meadow, and among the other good counsels which he gave them, he told them they ought not to mow the weed, since that only made it grow the more luxuriantly, but that they must pull it up by the roots.

But either because the tenants of the meadow did not, amongst the other prescriptions of the good master, take heed of his advice not to mow down the weed, but to pull it up, or because they did not understand him, or because, according to their calculations, it seemed foolish to obey, the result was that his advice not to mow the weed but to pull it up was not followed, just as if he had never proffered it, and the men went on mowing the weed and spreading it.

And although, during the succeeding years, there were men that reminded the tenants of the meadow of the advice of the kind, wise master, they did not heed them, and continued to do as before, so that mowing of the weed as soon as it began to appear became not only a custom but even a sacred tradition, and the meadow grew more and more infested. And the matter went so far that the meadow grew nothing but weeds, and men lamented this and invented all kinds of means to correct the evil; but the only one they did not use was

that which had long ago been prescribed by their kind, wise master.

And now, as time went on, it occurred to one man who saw the wretched condition into which the meadow had fallen, and who found among the master's forgotten prescriptions the rule not to mow the weed, but to pull it up by the root — it occurred to the man, I say, to remind the tenants of the meadow that they were acting foolishly, and that their folly had long ago been pointed out by the kind, wise master.

But what do you think! instead of putting credence in the correctness of this man's recollections, and in case they proved to be reliable ceasing to mow the weed, and in case he were mistaken proving to him the incorrectness of his recollections, or stigmatizing the good, wise master's recommendations as impracticable and not obligatory upon them, the tenants of the meadow did nothing of the sort; but they took exception to this man's recollections and began to abuse him. Some called him a conceited fool who imagined that he was the only one to understand the master's regulations; others called him a malicious false interpreter and slanderer; still others, forgetting that he was not giving them his own opinions, but was only reminding them of the prescriptions of the wise master whom they all revered, called him a dangerous man because he wished to pull up the weed and deprive them of their meadow. "He says we ought not to mow the meadow," said they, purposely suppressing the fact that the man did not say that it was not necessary to destroy the weed, but said that they should pull it up by the roots instead of mowing it, "but if we do not destroy the weed, then it will spread and wholly ruin our meadow. And why was the meadow granted to us if we must train the weed in it?"

And the general impression that this man was either a fool or a false interpreter, or had the purpose of injuring the people, became so deeply grounded that every one cast reproaches and ridicule upon him. And however earnestly he asseverated that he not only did

not desire to spread the weed, but on the contrary considered that the destruction of the weed was one of the chief duties of the agriculturist, just as it was meant by the good, wise master whose words he merely repeated, still they would not listen to him because they had definitely made up their minds that he was either a conceited fool misinterpreting the good, wise master's words, or a villain trying to induce men not to destroy the weeds but to protect and spread them more widely.

The same thing took place in my own case when I pointed out the injunction of the evangelical teaching about the non-resistance of evil by violence. This rule was laid down by Christ and after Him in all times by all His true disciples. But either because they did not notice this rule, or because they did not understand it, or because its fulfilment seemed to them too difficult, as time went the more completely this rule was forgotten, the farther the manner of men's lives departed from this rule; and finally it came to the pass to which it has now come that this rule has already begun to seem to people something new, strange, unheard-of, and even foolish. And I, also, have the same experience as the man had who reminded men of the good, wise master's prescription to refrain from mowing the weed, but to pull it up by the roots.

As the tenants of the meadow purposely shut their eyes to the fact that the counsel was not to give up destroying the weed, but to destroy it by a different method, and said, "We will not listen to this man, he is a fool; he forbids us to mow down the weeds and tells us to pull them up" — so in reply to my reminder that according to Christ's teaching in order to annihilate evil we must not employ violence against it, but must destroy it from the root with love, men said: "We will not listen to him, he is a fool; he advises not to oppose evil to evil so that evil may overwhelm us."

I said that, according to Christ's teaching, evil cannot be eradicated by evil; that all resistance of evil by violence only intensifies the evil, that according to Christ's teaching evil is eradicated by good. *Bless them that*

curse you, pray for them that abuse you, do good to them that hate you, love your enemies, and you will have no enemies![1]

I said that, according to Christ's teaching, the whole life of man is a battle with evil, a resistance of evil by reason and love, but that out of all the methods of resisting evil Christ excepted only the one unreasonable method of resisting evil with violence, which is equivalent to fighting evil with evil.

And I was misunderstood as saying that Christ taught that we must not resist evil. And all those whose lives were based on violence, and to whom in consequence violence was dear, were glad to take such a misconstruction of my words, and at the same time of Christ's words, and it was avowed that the teaching of non-resistance of evil was incredible, stupid, godless, and dangerous. And men calmly continue under the guise of destroying evil to make it more widely spread.

II

PARABLE THE SECOND

Men were trafficking in flour, butter, milk, and all kinds of food-stuffs. And as each one was desirous of receiving the greatest profit and becoming rich as soon as possible, all these men got more and more into the habit of adulterating their goods with cheap and injurious mixtures: with the flour they mixed bran and lime, they put oleomargarin into their butter, they put water and chalk into their milk. And until these goods reached the consumers all went well: the wholesale traders sold them to the retailers, and the retailers distributed them in small quantities.

There were many stores and shops, and the wares, it seemed, went off very rapidly. And the tradesmen were satisfied. But the city consumers, those that did not raise their own produce and were therefore obliged

[1] "The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles."

to buy it, found it very harmful and disagreeable. The flour was bad, the butter and milk were bad, but as there were no other wares except those adulterated to be had in the city markets, the city consumers continued to buy them, and they complained because the food tasted bad and was unwholesome; they blamed themselves, and ascribed it to the wretched way in which the food was prepared. Meantime the tradespeople continued more and more flagrantly to adulterate their food-stuffs with cheap foreign ingredients. Thus passed a sufficiently long time. The city people were all suffering, and no one had the resolution to express his dissatisfaction.

And it happened that a housekeeper who had always given her family food and drink of her own make came to the city. This woman had spent her whole life in the preparation of food, and though she was not a famous cook, still she knew very well how to bake bread and to cook good dinners.

This woman bought various articles in the city and began to bake and cook. Her loaves did not rise, but fell. Her cakes, owing to the oleomargarin butter, seemed tasteless. She set her milk, but there was no cream. The housekeeper instantly came to the conclusion that her purchases were poor. She examined them, and her surmises were confirmed. She found lime in the flour, oleomargarin in the butter, chalk in the milk. Finding that all the materials she had bought were adulterated, the housekeeper went to the bazaars and began in a loud voice to accuse the tradesmen, and to demand that they should either stock their shops with good, nutritious, unadulterated articles, or else cease to trade, and shut up shop.

But the tradesmen paid no attention to the housekeeper, but told her that their goods were first class, that the whole city had been buying of them for so many years, and that they even had medals, and they showed her their medals on their signs. But the housekeeper did not give in.

"I don't need any medals," said she, "but wholesome

food, so that I and my children may not have stomach troubles from it."

"Apparently, my good woman, you have never seen genuine flour and butter," said the tradesmen, showing her the white, pure-looking flour in varnished bins, the wretched imitation of butter lying in neat dishes, and the white fluid in glittering transparent jars.

"Of course I know them," replied the housekeeper, "because all my life long I have had to do with them, and I have cooked with them and have eaten them, I and my children. Your goods are adulterated. Here is the proof of it," said she, displaying the spoilt bread, the oleomargarin in the cakes, and the sediment in the milk. "You ought to throw all this stuff of yours into the river or burn it, and get unadulterated goods instead."

And the woman, standing in front of the shops, kept incessantly crying her one message to the purchasers who came by, and the purchasers began to be troubled.

Then perceiving that this audacious housekeeper was likely to injure their wares, the tradesmen said to the purchasers: —

"Look here, gentlemen, what a lunatic this woman is! She wants people to perish of starvation. She insists on our burning up and destroying all our provisions. What would you have to eat if we should heed her and refuse to sell you our goods? Do not listen to her, she is a coarse countrywoman, and she is no judge of provisions, and it is nothing but envy which makes her attack us. She is poor, and wants every one else to be as poor as she is."

Thus spoke the tradesmen to the gathering throng, purposely blinking the fact that the woman wanted, not that all provisions should be destroyed, but that good ones should be substituted for bad.

And thereupon the throng fell upon the woman and began to beat her. And though she assured them all that she had no wish to destroy the food-stuffs, that, on the contrary, she had all her life been occupied in feeding others and herself, but that she only wanted that those men that took upon themselves the feeding of the

people should not poison them with deleterious adulterations pretending to be edible. Though she pleaded her cause eloquently, they refused to hear her because their minds were made up that she wanted to deprive people of the food which they needed.

The same thing has happened to me in regard to the art and science of our day.

All my life long I have been fed on this food, and to the best of my ability I have attempted to feed others on it. And as this for me is a food and not an object of traffic or luxury, I know beyond a question when food is food and when it is only a counterfeit. And now when I made trial of the food which in our time began to be offered for sale in the intellectual bazaar under the guise of art and science, and attempted to feed those dear to me with it, I discovered that a large part of this food was not genuine. And when I declared that the art and the science on sale in the intellectual bazaar are *margarined* or at least contain great mixtures of what is foreign to true art and true science, and that I know this because the produce I have bought in the intellectual bazaar has been proved to be, not merely disadvantageous to me and those near and dear to me, but positively deleterious, then I was hooted at and abused, and it was insinuated that I did this because I was untrained and could not properly treat of such lofty objects.

When I began to show that the dealers themselves in these intellectual wares were all the time charging one another of cheating, when I called to mind that in all times under the name of art and science much that was bad and harmful was offered to men, and that consequently in our time also the same danger was threatening, that this was no joke, that the poison for the soul was many times more dangerous than a poison for the body, and that therefore these spiritual products ought to be examined with the greatest attention when they are offered to us in the form of food, and everything counterfeit and deleterious ought to be rejected, — when I began to say this, no one, no one, not a single man in

a single article or book made reply to these arguments, but from all the shops there was a chorus of cries against me as against the woman: "He is a fool! He wants to destroy art and science which we live by! Beware of him and do not heed him! Hear us, hear us! We have the very latest foreign wares!"

III

PARABLE THE THIRD

Travelers were making a journey. And they happened to lose their way, so that they found themselves proceeding, not on a smooth road, but across a bog, among clumps of bushes, briers, and fallen trees, which blocked their progress, and even to move grew more and more difficult.

Then the travelers divided into two parties; one decided not to stop, but to keep going in the direction that they had been going, assuring themselves and the others that they had not wandered from the right road, and were sure to reach their journey's end.

The other party decided that, as the direction in which they were now going was evidently not the right one — otherwise they would long ago have reached the journey's end — it was necessary to find the road, and in order to find it, it was requisite that without delay they should move as rapidly as possible in all directions. All the travelers were divided between these two opinions: some decided to keep going straight ahead, the others decided to make trials in all directions; but there was one man who, without sharing either opinion, declared that before continuing in the direction in which they had been going, or beginning to move rapidly in all directions, hoping that by this means they might find the right way, it was necessary first of all to pause and deliberate on their situation, and then after due deliberation to decide on one thing or the other.

But the travelers were so excited by the disturbance,

were so alarmed at their situation, they were so desirous of flattering themselves with the hope that they had not lost their way, but had only temporarily wandered from the road, and would soon find it again, and, above all, they had such a desire to forget their terror by moving about, that this opinion was met with universal indignation, with reproaches, and with the ridicule of those of both parties.

"It is the advice of weakness, cowardice, sloth," they said.

"It is a fine way to reach the end of our journey, sitting down and not moving from the place!" cried others.

"For this are we men, and for this is strength given us, to struggle and labor, conquering obstacles, and not pusillanimously giving in to them," exclaimed still others.

And in spite of what was said by the man that differed from the rest, "how if we proceeded in a wrong direction without changing it, we should never attain our goal, but go farther from it, and how we should never attain it either if we kept flying from one direction to another, and how the only means of attaining our goal was by taking observation from the sun or the stars and thus finding what direction we must take to reach it, and having chosen it to stick to it — and how to do this it was necessary first of all to halt, and to halt not for the purpose of stopping, but to find the right way and then unfalteringly to go in it, and how for either case it was necessary to stop and consider" — in spite of all this argument, they refused to heed him.

And the first division of the travelers went off in the direction in which they had been going, and the second division kept changing their course; but neither division succeeded in attaining their journey's end, but up to the present time, moreover, they have not yet escaped from the bushes and the briers, but are still lost.

Exactly the same thing happened to me when I attempted to express my doubts as to whether the road which we have taken through the dark forest of the labor question and through the all-swallowing bog of the end-

less armament of the nations is exactly the right route by which we ought to go, that it is very possible that we have lost our way, and that, therefore, it might be well for us for a time to stop moving in that direction which is evidently wrong, and first of all to consider, by means of the universal and eternal laws of truth revealed to us, what the direction is by which we intend to go.

No one replied to this, not a person said, "We are not mistaken in our direction and we are not gone astray; we are sure of this for this reason and for that."

Not a person said, "Possibly we are mistaken, but we have an infallible means of correcting our error without ceasing to move."

No one said either the one thing or the other. But all were indignant, took offense, and hastened to quench my solitary voice with a simultaneous outburst.

"We are so indolent and backward! And this is the advice of indolence, sluggishness, inefficiency!"

Some even went so far as to add:—

"It 's all nonsense! Don't listen to him. Follow us."

And they shouted like those that reckon that salvation is to be found in unchangedly traveling a once selected road, whatever it may have been; like those also that expect to find salvation in flying about in all directions.

"Why wait? Why consider? Push forward! Everything will come out of itself!"

Men have lost their way and are suffering in consequence. It would seem that the first main application of energy which should be put forth ought to be directed, not to the confirmation of the movement that has seduced us into the false position where we are, but to the cessation of it. It would seem clear that as soon as we stopped we might, in a measure, comprehend our situation, and discover the direction in which we ought to go in order to attain true happiness, not for one man, not for one class of men, but that general good of humanity toward which all men are striving and every human heart by itself. But how is it? Men invent everything possible, but do not hit upon the one thing

that might prove their salvation, or if it did not do that, might at least ameliorate their condition; I mean, that they should pause for a moment and not go on increasing their misfortunes by their fallacious activity. Men are conscious of the wretchedness of their condition, and are doing all they can to avoid it, but the one thing that would assuredly ameliorate it they are unwilling to do, and the advice given them to do it, more than anything else, rouses their indignation.

If there were any possibility of doubting the fact that we have gone astray, then this treatment of the advice to "think it over" proves more distinctly than anything else how hopelessly astray we have gone and how great is our despair.

1895.

A TERRIBLE QUESTION[1]

IS there in Russia sufficient grain to feed the people until the new crop is gathered?

Some say there is, others say there is not; but no one knows this absolutely. But this must be known, and known definitely now before the beginning of the winter — just as it is necessary for men who are going off on a long voyage to know whether the ship has a sufficient supply of fresh water and food or not.

It is terrible to think what would happen to the officers and passengers of the ship when in the middle of the ocean it should transpire that all the provisions had gone. It is still more terrible to think what will happen to us if we believe in those that assure us that we have grain enough for all the starving, and it should prove before spring that they were mistaken in their assurances.

It is terrible to think of the consequence of such a blunder. Why, the consequence of this blunder would be something awful: the death of millions by starvation, and, worst of all misfortunes, the exasperation and anger of men. It is good merely by cannon-shots to warn the inhabitants of Petersburg that the water is rising, because that is all that can be done. No one knows, no one can know, how high the water will rise; whether it will stand where it stood the year before, or reach its limit of four and twenty years ago, or rise still higher.

The famine of this year, moreover, is a misfortune incomparably greater than the misfortune of the flood,

[1] The "terrible question" was decided propitiously, so that in Russia there was an abundance of grain. — PUBLISHER'S NOTE.

incomparably more universal, it threatens all Russia; it is misfortune the degree of which may and should, not only be foreseen, but may and should be foreseen and prevented.

"Ah! that will do! For Russia there will be sufficient, and more than sufficient, of every kind of grain for all," is said and written by certain people, and others who like freedom from bother are inclined to believe this. But it is impossible to believe what is said at haphazard, or by conjecture, regarding an object of such awful importance.

If it is said that in regard to the doubtful solidity of a bath in which people go once a week on a Saturday, the beams still stand, and there is no need of replacing them, one may believe them and risk leaving the bath without repairs; but if it concerns the dubious ceiling of a theater in which thousands are sitting every evening, the unanimous decision will be, that though the probabilities are it will not fall this evening, still one cannot feel confidence and be at ease. The threatened danger is too great.

Now the danger threatening Russia is that the grain necessary for the sustenance of the people is not to be had at any price, and this danger is so awful that the imagination refuses to depict what would happen if this was so; and therefore to content ourselves with the unsupported assurances of those that declare that in Russia we have enough grain, not only would not follow, but would be senseless and criminal.

But does such a danger exist? Is there any likelihood that there will not be enough bread?

The following observations may serve as an answer to this question:—

In the first place, it is a fact that a whole third of Russia is attacked by famine, and that third is the very one which has always supported a large part of the other two-thirds. Kaluga, Tver, Moscow, all the "black earth" and northern governments, even the "black earth" districts of these governments, where there was no failure in the crops, have never lived on

their own products, but have always bought it of those that now must live on foreign grain.

Therefore, if it is reckoned, let us suppose, that each person must have ten puds — well, let us say there are only twenty millions — though they are reckoned as high as forty millions — of inhabitants in these famine-stricken districts, then two hundred million puds of grain will be needed, and this is far from representing the whole amount of grain necessary for the sustenance of all Russia. To this figure must be added all that is needed besides for those that have subsisted in former years on the grain of the famine-stricken localities, and this very probably will constitute as much again.

The failure of the harvest in the most fertile places accomplishes something like what happens when you shorten the arm of a lever: you not only diminish the power of the shorter end, but you increase as many times the power of the larger end. A third of Russia is attacked by famine, the most fertile part, which has fed the other two-thirds, and therefore it is very probable that there will not be enough grain for all. This is one consideration.

The second consideration is that the countries bordering on Russia will suffer in the same way from failure of harvest, and that therefore a great amount of grain has been exported, and now in the form of wheat continues to be exported abroad.

The third consideration is that in absolute contrariety to what happened during the famine year, 1840, this year there is, and can be, no stores of grain.

In Russia something has happened like what happened according to the Bible tale in Egypt; only with this difference, that in Russia there was no Joseph to foretell, and there have been no provident and orderly men like Joseph; but there have been mills, railways, banks, and both the authorities and private persons have suffered from great lack of money. In all the years preceding, more than seven, there has been much grain, prices have been low; but the lack of money has grown and grown as it regularly increased amongst us, and the

conveniences of trade, mills, railways, and buying agents encouraged to trade, and brought it about that wheat was wholly sold by autumn.

If during the last years, when wheat had reached an especially low price, certain venders began to lay in a store of grain, waiting for a price, then this storage was so difficult that, as soon as the prices advanced at the beginning of the spring of this year, and reached fifty and sixty kopeks a pud, then all the grain was sold and cleaned out, and nothing remained of the provisions of previous years. In 1840 not only had the proprietors and tradesmen plenty of provisions, but everywhere among the muzhiks were from three to five years' stores of old grain. Now this custom has gone by, and there is nothing like it anywhere. In this consists the third consideration: that grain this year will not be sufficient.

But not only is there a probability of this, but there are also symptoms, and sufficiently definite symptoms, that this lack exists.

One of these symptoms is the every day more and more frequently repeated phenomenon that there is no bread on sale in the depths of the famine-stricken localities, as in that in which I am now — in the Dankovsky District, there is no *rye on sale. The muzhiks cannot get flour.*

Yesterday I saw two muzhiks of the Dankovsky District, who had been driving around a radius well known to them, of twenty versts, to all the mills and shops, to buy for money two puds of flour, and they could not find it. One begged for some at the *dépôt* of another district; the other obtained some.

And this phenomenon is not exceptional; it is constantly repeated, and everywhere. Millers come to ask for Christ's sake — *Khrista radi* — to let them have flour at the zemstvo *dépôts*, because they have no flour, and cannot get any. Of tradesmen in the cities, of the railway, it may be bought in bulk, at least a half a carload or a carload; but at retail there is none to be had. The great merchants who have a supply will not sell at all, they are waiting; the small tradesmen, storekeepers,

buy up all they can, and sell it again at a profit to the wholesale merchants. Retail trade is only in bazaars, on market days, and then, if the purchaser comes too late, there is none to be had.

This symptom, it seems to me, shows with sufficient plainness that there is not as much grain as is needed. The same thing is proved partly, also, by the prices, although this year, hitherto, there are reasons which do not permit prices to be a legitimate proof of the conformity of demand with supply. The prices are lower than they ought to be, and are maintained on this lower level artificially: in the first place by the interdiction of exporting grain abroad; in the second place by the action of the zemstvos, which sell rye and meal at reduced prices. I am speaking of the price of rye, supposing that the prices of other food products — beets, potatoes, millet, oats — more or less correspond to the price of rye.

The prohibition of foreign exportations reduced prices, in other words, caused prices to be an unreliable indication of the amount of any given commodity. Just exactly as the height of the level of the water in a dammed river cannot be an indication of its actual level, so the present price of rye cannot accurately mark the relation of the demand to its supply. The prohibition of the export of other breadstuffs has the same effect. The prices now existing are prices not self-sustaining, and are in any case reduced temporarily, in consequence of the prohibition of export. This is one cause of the fact that prices are lower than they ought to be.

Another cause is the action of the zemstvos.

The zemstvos everywhere buy only in small quantities, rarely one-fourth part of the grain needed for nourishment according to their lists, and they sell the grain at a reduced price. This action of the zemstvos also reduces the price, since if there were no sale from the *dépôts* of the zemstvos, this sale would come from the large dealers who, according as the demand increased, would raise the prices. And therefore I think the price now maintained is not the actual price.

The price at the present time I think is far lower than what it would be if it were not for the action of the zemstvos. And this price would immediately rise with extraordinary rapidity if only it should occur to the zemstvos to buy the remaining three-fourths of the grain they need.

We might say that the price will not rise if the zemstvos had bought now the whole quantity needed, and rye were on sale at that price. But according to the present state of things there is no likelihood that this was so. According to the present state of circumstances, that is to say, at the price of one ruble seventy kopeks, when the zemstvos did not buy even one-fourth of the necessary grain, and when there was no rye offered for sale anywhere, even in small quantities, there is, on the contrary, a probability that by reason of the zemstvos buying the whole quantity they needed the price would suddenly rise to a price which would show that there was none of the grain in Russia. The price even now in our localities has risen to the highest notch to which it has ever attained, to one ruble seventy kopeks, and still continues to rise regularly.

All these symptoms show that there is a great probability that Russia has not the grain she needs.

But besides these symptoms there is still another phenomenon which ought to compel us to take all possible measures to avert the misfortune that threatens us. This phenomenon is the panic which has seized society, that is to say, the undefined obscure terror of some expected misfortune — the terror which people communicate to one another, the terror which deprives people of the capability of working to any purpose. This panic is expressed even in the prohibition of exporting first rye, then of the other breadstuffs, except for some reason of millet, and in such measures, on the one hand, as assigning great sums for the starving, and on the other hand, the collecting by the local authorities of assessments from those who can pay, as if the extraction of money from the country were not a direct enhancement of the poverty of the country.

A rich muzhik holds a mortgage on a poor one's ungathered crops. He would not push him, but the taxes are demanded from him, so he has to demand payment from the poor man, and ruins him.

This panic is particularly noticeable in the controversies between the various local departments. There is a repetition of what always takes place in a panic terror; some pull in one direction, some in another.

This panic is also noticeable in the amusements and activities of the people. I will adduce one example, the movement of the people toward wage-earning.

The people toward the end of October of this year go to seek occupation in Moscow and Petersburg, at the time when all the labors for the winter have ceased, when provisions are three times more expensive than usual, and every householder has got rid of all the superfluous persons he can, at a time when everywhere there is a multitude of laboring men thrown out of work — then people, who never had any position in the cities, go and seek those situations.

Is it not evident to every one that in such conditions there is more likelihood of every proprietor of a lottery ticket drawing two hundred thousand rubles than of a muzhik who comes to Moscow from the country finding a place, and that every journey, even though very inexpensive, with the expenses incidental to travel, where there is some drinking, is only a supernumerary difficulty rushing on the poor?

It would seem as if it ought to be evident, but all come — come back and come again. Is not this a symptom of the absolute senselessness which seizes the throng at every panic?

All these symptoms, and chiefly the phenomenon of the panic, are very significant, and therefore one cannot help fearing. It is impossible to say, as is generally said about the enemy before our forces are compared with his, we can catch him with our hats. The enemy, the terrible enemy, stands here before us, and we cannot say we do not fear him, because we know what he is, and more than all, we know that we fear him.

But if we fear him, then it is necessary for us before all to know his strength. It is impossible for us to remain in this ignorance in which we find ourselves.

Let us admit that Russian society, the people that live outside the famine-stricken localities, find their solidarity both spiritual and material with the unfortunate people, and undergo actual serious sacrifices for the help of the starving. Let us admit that the activity of these people, who live now amid the starving, laboring for them, according to the measure of their ability, will continue till the end, and that the numbers of these people will increase; let us admit that the people themselves are not down-hearted, and will fight with poverty, as they are now fighting with it, by all negative and positive means — in other words restraining themselves and increasing their energy and inventiveness for the attainment of the means of life; let us admit that all this has been done and will be done for a month, two, three, six months — then suddenly the price goes up, goes up, just as it has been going up, from forty-five kopeks to one ruble seventy kopeks, regularly from bazaar to bazaar, and in a few weeks reaches two or three rubles a pud, and it transpires that there is no grain, and that all the sacrifices endured, both by those that gave money and by those that have been living and laboring amid the sufferers, were wasted expenditures of means and forces, and chiefly that all the energy of the people was expended in vain, and in spite of all their efforts they, that is a part of them, would nevertheless have to die of starvation, then how could we know and prevent it?

It is impossible, impossible, and again impossible to remain in this uncertainty, impossible for us, wise, learned people to remain so. The muzhik whom I saw yesterday was doing about all that he could. He had procured money, and had gone to seek for grain. He had been to Mikhaïl Vasilyef's, he had been to the mill, he had been to Chernavo — nowhere could he obtain meal. After he had gone to all the places where meal might possibly be, he knew that he had done his best; and if

after this he could not get meal anywhere and he and his family should be attacked by famine, he would know that he had done to the best of his ability, and his conscience would be at rest.

But for us, if it is shown that there is no grain to be had, and our labors are brought to naught, and we and the people maybe are perishing together, our consciences will not be at rest. We might have known how much grain would be needed by us, and might have got it. If our learning and our science are of any use to us, then for what more important purpose than to enable us to help in such a universal tribulation as ours to-day? Let us decide how much grain is necessary for the nourishment of those that have none this year and how much there is in Russia, and if there is not as much as is necessary, then let us order from foreign lands as much grain as is needed; this is our direct business, and just as natural as what the muzhik did yesterday when he made a circuit of twenty versts. And our consciences will be at rest only when we make our circuit and do in it all that we can. For him the circuit is Dankof, Klekotki; for us the circuit is India, America, Australia. We not only know that these countries exist, we are already in friendly intercourse with their inhabitants.

But how can we estimate what we need and the grain which we have? Can this be so difficult? We who can count how many kinds of beetles there are in the world, how many microbes there are in such and such a space, how many millions of versts it is to the stars, and how many puds of iron and hydrogen there are in each one — we, forsooth, are not able to reckon up how much people need to eat so as not to perish of starvation, and how much grain has been garnered by the people from the fields whereby we have been, and still are, nourished. We who with such wealth of detail have collected such a mass of statistical materials — so far as I know up to the present time of no use to any living person — details as to the percentage of births as compared to marriages and deaths and the like — we suddenly find ourselves

not in a condition to collect the only information which in the course of a century is helpful, is really useful. This cannot be. To collect these details — accurate ones and not conjectural, and not approximate — details like those furnished in regard to the number of the population in a one day's census, is possible.

Information is needed as to how much more than the ordinary amount of grain bought for the support of the Russian people must be furnished this year for the inhabitants of the famine-stricken localities, and how much grain there is in Russia.

Whether the answers to these questions are easy or difficult, they are indispensable for the prevention, not only of the panic, — that is, of that confusedly contagious terror of approaching misfortune in which men are now living, — but principally for the averting of the misfortune itself.

And not approximate, not haphazard, answers are required, but systematic ones; the matter is too serious for us to be able to do it merely sketching the head, in other words, to build this vault which we do, not knowing whether the stone will suffice to complete it.

These details the government may receive; the zemstvo may receive them on the spot, and more trustworthy than all, a private society constituted for this purpose may receive them. There is not a district where there would not be found, not merely one, but many men, who would be able and would willingly serve in this business.

It seems to me not excessively difficult. In a week's time, without much trouble, an active man can traverse a quarter or a fifth of a district, especially if he lives in it; and with a possibility of error of from ten to fifteen per cent can determine the amount of grain requisite for subsistence, and the amount on hand above and beyond that required by each person. I, at least, will undertake personally to furnish such information within a week's time regarding a quarter of the district in which I live. The same is said and can be done by the majority of the country people with whom I have talked in regard to this. To organize a central bureau in which

could be collected and grouped all the separate items, and which might send its members with this object in view into places where volunteers were not forthcoming, I imagine would be feasible and not difficult. There might be mistakes, there might be concealments — concealments on the part of those having grain — there might be transfers of grain from one place to another, causing errors; but the errors of reckoning I imagine would not be great, and the information received in this way would be sufficiently precise to answer the chief question, painful as it is, even if not expressed but felt by all: Is there, or is there not, enough grain in Russia?

If, let us suppose, it is shown that this year, according to the reckoning of the grain employed generally for the army and for liquor-distilling, the abundance against that which is necessary for the sustenance of the people constitutes one hundred or fifty million puds, supposing that a part of these one hundred million might be kept by dealers, a part spoilt, a part burned, a part might constitute a mistake in reckoning, we might calmly and resolutely go on living. If there was no superfluity at all, and it was shown that in Russia there was not as much grain as was necessary, the state of things would be dubious and dangerous; but, nevertheless, it might be that, by not ordering grain from abroad, only by modifying the amount of grain used, for example, on liquor-distilling, giving out some of the grain gratuitously, it might be possible to go on living and working.

But if it were proved that we are one hundred or fifty million puds of grain short, the situation would be dangerous. It would be analogous to what takes place when a fire flashes out and catches a building. But if we know this now it would be as if when the fire first burst out, it was still possible to extinguish it.

If we should find this out only when the last ten thousand puds were going, then it would be like the fire which should have already caught the building and there was now little hope of escaping from it.

If we now knew that we had an insufficiency of grain,

let it be fifty or one hundred or even two hundred million puds, all this would not be so terrible. We could now buy that amount of grain in America and it could always be paid for by governmental, social, or popular funds.

The people who are working ought to know that their work has a meaning and is not wasted.

Without this consciousness hands fall idle. But in order to know this for that work in which now are employed an enormous number of Russian people, it is necessary to know now, instantly, within two or three weeks, whether we have enough grain for this year, and if not, then where we can get enough to remedy the deficit.

Byegichevko, November 13, 1891.

MEANS OF HELPING THE POPULATION SUFFERING FROM BAD HARVESTS

HELP for the population suffering from bad harvests may have two objects: support of the peasant proprietors and prevention of people running the risk of illness, and even death, from want and from the bad quality of food.

Are these objects attained by the aid now extended in the form of twenty or thirty pounds of flour a month to each consumer, reckoning or not reckoning laborers? I think not. And I think not from the following considerations:—

All the peasant families of all agricultural Russia may be distributed under three types. First, the wealthy farm with eight or ten souls, on the average twelve souls to a family, with from three to five hired men, on the average four, from three to five horses, on the average four, and from three to nine desyatins of land, on the average six. That is a rich farmer. Such a muzhik not only feeds his family with his grain, but frequently hires one or two laborers, buys up land of those worse off than himself, and sells them grain and seed. All this, maybe, is done on conditions not favorable for the poor, but the result is that in the country, where there are ten per cent of these rich men, the land is not idle, and in case of necessity the poor man may have the means of obtaining grain, seed, even money.

The second type is that of the average muzhik, with great difficulty making the ends of the year meet by means of his two parcels of land, and one or two

"hands," and one or two horses. This dvor is almost wholly supported by its own grain. What it lacks is obtained by a member of the family living out.

And the third type is the poor fellow with a family of from three to five "souls," with one laboring man, and frequently with no horse. This kind never has grain enough; every year he is obliged to invent some means of getting himself out of his tight place, and he is always within a hair's breadth of being a pauper, and at the slightest misfortune he will beg.

The aid given in the form of flour to the inhabitants of the famine-stricken places is distributed by means of lists of peasant families according to their means. By means of these lists calculations are made as to how much help is to be afforded to any particular family. And this help is given only to the very poorest, — that is to say, to the families of the third type.

A "dvor" of the first type, — belonging to the rich or well-to-do peasant who still has several chetverts[1] of oats, who has two horses, a cow, sheep, receives no help. But investigation into the condition, not only of the average, but of the rich muzhik, makes one see that if the peasant agricultural class is to be sustained, these are the very farmers that need help most.

Let us suppose that a rich peasant has still a little rye left, he has twenty or more chetverts of oats, he has five horses and two cows and eighteen sheep, and because he has all this he receives no help. But reckon up his income and his expenses, and you will see that he is in just as much need as the poor man. In order to support the rotation which he has undertaken with his hired land, he must sow about ten chetverts. What grain remains, at forty, fifty, even sixty rubles, is nothing in comparison with what he needs for his family of twelve souls. For twelve souls he needs fifteen puds at one ruble fifty kopeks — twenty-two rubles fifty kopeks a month — two hundred and twenty-five rubles for ten months. Moreover, he needs forty, fifty, or seventy

[1] A *chetvert* is 5.77 bushels; a *pud* is 40 Russian, or 36.11 avoirdupois pounds; a *desyatin* of land is 2.7 acres. — Ed.

rubles to satisfy the rent on his hired land; he has to pay his taxes. The members of his family living out this year either receive less than before, by grain being high, or are entirely paid off. He needs three hundred and fifty rubles, but he receives even less than two hundred, and therefore one thing is left for him to do, — to give up his hired land, to sell his seed oats, to sell a part of his horses, for which there is no price, — in other words, to descend to the level of the average muzhik, and even lower, because the average muzhik has a smaller family.

But no help, or very little, is given to the average muzhik if he has any oats left or a horse or two. So that he is obliged to sell his land to the exceptionally rich, to eat his seed oats, and then also his horse. So that by the distribution of help as it obtains now, the rich must infallibly descend to the level of the average and the average to the level of the poor. And by the conditions obtaining this year, almost all, except the unusually rich, are obliged to descend in this way. The distribution of flour, not attaining its object of supporting the peasant husbandry, does not attain its second object either — that of safeguarding the people from famine diseases. The distribution of flour by "souls" does not secure this for the following reasons: —

In the first place, because in such a distribution of flour there is always a possibility that the person receiving it will yield to the temptation of squandering what he has received, and selling it for drink, and this has happened, though not in many instances.

In the second place, because this help, falling into the hands of the poor, saves them from starvation only in case the family has some means of its own. The largest apportionment amounts to thirty pounds to each man. And if thirty pounds of flour, together with potatoes and some admixture with the flour for baking bread, may support a man for the period of a month, then in complete poverty, when they have not the wherewithal to buy even lebeda-weed to mix with their bread, thirty pounds of flour is used up in the form of unmodi-

fied bread in the course of fifteen or twenty days, and the people, left in an absolutely starving condition for ten days, are likely to become sick and even to die from lack of food.

In the third place, the distribution of flour among poor families, even among those that still have means of their own, does not attain the purpose of forefending men from famine diseases, because in a family where strong men easily get along with poor food, the weak, the young, and the old contract disease from want and the poor quality of food.

In all famine-stricken places all families, both rich and poor, eat miserable bread made with lebeda-weed.

Strange to say now in a large number of cases the very poor, on receiving grain from the zemstvo, eat unmodified bread, while almost all the rich families eat it with orach, with this year's disgusting unripe lebeda-weed.[1]

And it all the time happens that while the stronger members of a rich family thrive on the lebeda-weed bread, the weaker, older members pine away and die of it.

Thus a sick woman comes from a rich farm, carrying in her hand a piece of black lebeda-weed bread constituting her principal article of food, and asking admission in the eating-room simply because she is sick, and then only while she is sick.

Another example: I come to a muzhik who is not receiving assistance and considers himself rich. He lives alone with his wife; they have no children. I find them at dinner. Potato soup and bread with the lebeda-weed. In the trough is new bread, likewise adulterated with a large proportion of the lebeda. The husband and wife are healthy and happy, but on the stove is

[1] The fact that this year *lebeda*, orach, or pig-weed is universally employed in food may be explained by the tradition that they have eaten this weed before, — and there is a proverb to the effect that "it is no misfortune to have lebeda in the rye," — and the fact that it grows in the rye-field and is ground up with the rye. It seems to me that if it were not for this tradition and if it were not found in the rye-fields they would sooner adulterate their bread with oats, straw, or sawdust than with this deleterious weed. But they mix it in everywhere. — AUTHOR'S NOTE.

an old woman who is ill from the effects of the lebeda-weed bread, and declares that it is better to eat once a day only to have good bread to eat, but that this does not keep up one's strength.

Or a third case: a peasant woman comes from a rich farm to ask for her thirteen-year-old daughter admission to the eating-room because they cannot feed her at home. This daughter is of illegitimate birth, and therefore she is not liked and is not willingly fed. There are many similar cases, and therefore the distribution of help in flour from hand to hand does not keep the old, the feeble, and the unpopular members of the family from sickness and death, in consequence of the unsuitability or lack of food.

Painful as it is to say this, notwithstanding the remarkable energy and even self-control of the majority of provincial workers, their activity, consisting in the distribution of help in corn, does not fulfil its purpose of supporting the agricultural peasantry or of preventing the possibility of diseases from famine.

But if what is done now is not good, what is good? What should be done?

Two things in my opinion are necessary, not for the support merely of the agricultural peasantry, but to prevent them from ultimate ruin: the organization of work for every community able to work; and the establishment of free refectories for the young, the old, the feeble, and the sick in all country places suffering from the famine.

The organization of labor ought to be such that it should be accessible, well-known, and familiar to the population, and not such as the people have never occupied themselves with or even seen, or else such as they are often unable to perform; as, for instance, by compelling the members of the families who have never gone away to leave home, or undergo other adverse conditions, such as lack of clothing.

Work ought to be such that, besides their work out of doors, to which all the capable and able-bodied muzhiks can resort for wages, there should be domestic work

suitable for the whole population of the famine-stricken places — men, women, hale old men, and half-grown children.

This year's distress is due not only to lack of grain, but also to the no less absolute lack of both money and chances of earning money — there is no work, and several millions of the population are condemned to enforced idleness.

If the grain necessary for the support of the population is at hand, in other words can be placed where it is needed, at a price within their reach, then the starving people might earn this grain for themselves, provided only there was an opportunity of work, and materials for work and sale.

But if they do not have this opportunity, hundreds of millions will be irrevocably wasted in the distribution of gratuitous aid, but the misery will not be relieved. The matter is not wholly in the material loss; the idleness of a whole population receiving gratuitous food has a terribly demoralizing tendency.

Outside industries may be organized in the most varied ways, both for winter and still more for summer-time, and God grant that these industries may be organized as speedily as possible and on the largest possible scale. But besides these great private industries, it is a matter of immediate necessity and enormous importance that the population be furnished with the opportunity of doing their own familiar work, without leaving their homes and their accustomed surroundings, and of getting pay for it, even though it be at a very cheap rate.

In the famine-stricken country districts neither hemp nor flax grew, oats almost wholly failed, and the women have no yarn and nothing to weave. The wives, the girls, and the old women, ordinarily occupied, sit idle. Moreover, the muzhiks, who stay at home and have no money to buy linden bark, also sit without their usual winter avocations — the weaving of *lapti*, or bark shoes. The children, as well, waste their time idly, for the schools are for the most part closed. The population,

having to face only the trying scenes of a more exaggerated need, deprived of their ordinary and more than ever indispensable means of recreation and forgetfulness, — of work, — sit for whole days at a time with folded hands, discussing various rumors and propositions about help given and to be given, but especially about their poverty; "they grow gloomy and lose their spirits, and that is the reason more than anything else that they get sick," said a sensible old man to me.

Not to mention the economical significance of work for this year, its moral significance is enormous. Work, any kind of work which should employ the idle people this year, is a most pressing necessity.

Until we shall see organized the great industries for which there were various very sensible plans, now, it is rumored, being established, and destined to confer inestimable blessings, if only in the establishment of them the habits and convenience of the population are taken into consideration, — if only in all the famine-stricken districts the opportunity is given for all the remaining people to work at the work they are accustomed to, the men to pleat lapti and the women to spin and weave, and the opportunity is given to sell what they make by this labor, — then this would be, at least, a great help against the decline of the Russian husbandry, even if it did not entirely stop it.

If it be granted that a place can be obtained for cloth at eight kopeks the arshin — and this is possible when it is produced in large quantities — and that lapti which will last for years will be bought at ten kopeks a pair, then each man's earnings will be at the very least five kopeks, that is to say one ruble fifty kopeks a month. If in addition to this it is admitted that in every family on the average not more than one-fourth of the members are unable to work, then it seems that for every person in a family there will be earned one-fourth of 4.50 kopeks, in other words 1.12 kopek; that is to say, considerably more than what now comes from the zemstvo with such strain, bickerings, and quarrels, and producing such general discontent.

Such would be the calculation, if work familiar to all the country population, unquestionably accessible, and the very cheapest, were performed.

Means would be received exceeding that which is now received from a gratuitous or loan distribution, to say nothing of the insoluble difficulty of giving it out, and especially the discontent which is produced by individual distribution. For the attainment of this it would be necessary to spend comparatively small sums for the purchase of materials for labor — flax and linden bark, and secure a place for these productions.

In the organization of these industries, and the furnishing the women with materials for spinning and the sale of the fabric spun by them, many people are already interested, but as yet only on a very small scale. We have also begun this work, but up to the present time have not yet the flax, wool, and bast ordered. Our proposition to the peasants to occupy themselves with work for the sale of lapti and cloth was everywhere received with enthusiasm. They would say to us: —

"If we earn only three kopeks a day it is far better than to sit idle."

Of course this refers only to the five winter months; during the four summer months, till the first fruits, their industries might be vastly more productive.

For the attainment of our purpose, not, perhaps, the support of peasant husbandry, but at least the stoppage of its decay, there is in my opinion only this means — the organization of industries.

For the attainment of our second purpose, the salvation of the people from disease consequent on bad and insufficient food, in my opinion, the only infallible means is the organization in every village of a free table at which every man may have enough to eat if he is hungry.

The organization of free tables, begun by us more than a month ago, is now carried on with a success exceeding our expectations. These eating-rooms are arranged in the following way: —

On my arrival at Yepifansky District, toward the end

of September, I met my old friend, I. I. Rayevsky, to whom I communicated my intention of establishing free tables in the famine-stricken districts. He invited me to take up my quarters at his house, and while not desisting from all other forms of help, not only approved my plan of establishing free tables, but undertook to assist me in this work; and with that love for the people, resolution, and simplicity characteristic of him, immediately, even before our arrival at his house, began this business, opening six such eating-rooms in his own vicinity.

The method employed by him consisted in his proposing to widows or the poorest inhabitants of the poorest villages to feed those that should come to them, and in furnishing the necessary provisions for this purpose.

The starosta and his assistants made out a list of the children and old people deserving of maintenance at the free table, and these eating-rooms were opened in six villages. These eating-rooms, in spite of the fact that they were opened by the starostas and Rayevsky's steward, without his personal superintendence, went very well and were maintained about a month.

Toward the time of our arrival, which coincided with the first distribution of help from the government, five of the free eating-rooms were closed, because the persons frequenting them began to receive a monthly allowance, and consequently did not need double help.

Very soon, however, in spite of the distribution of aid, the need had so increased that it was felt to be necessary to reopen the closed eating-rooms and establish new ones. In the course of the four weeks spent by us here we opened thirty.

At first we opened them in accordance with information received concerning the most poverty-stricken villages, but now for more than a week, from various directions, petitions have come to us in regard to opening new eating-rooms, but we have not yet had time to grant them.

The act of opening eating-rooms is as follows — we at least have proceeded in this way: Having learned

of a particularly needy village, we drive to it, go to the starosta, and having explained our purpose, we call in some of the old men and question them about the actual condition of the farms from one end of the village to the other. The starosta, his wife, the old men, and perhaps one or two more who have come out of curiosity to the izba, describe to us the state of affairs in the village.

"Well, on the left hand side: Maksim Aptokhin. How is he?"

"His is a hard case. He has children, seven of them. And no bread this long time. We must relieve him of his old woman and one child."

We write down, "From Maksim Aptokhin — two." Then comes Feodor Abramof.

"They are in a bad case too. Still, they can get along." But here the starosta's wife puts in a word, and says that he is in a bad state and we must relieve him of one child. Then comes an old man, a soldier of Nicholas's time.

"He is almost dead of starvation."

Demyon Sapronof — "they are subsisting."

And thus the whole village is scanned.

A proof of the justice and lack of caste feeling shown by the peasants in appraising the needs of the villagers may be seen in this: that notwithstanding the fact that many peasants were not admitted in the first village, in the village of Tatishchevo in Ruikhotskaya Volost', where we opened an eating-room, in the number of the unquestionably poor whom we had to admit to the free table, the peasants nominated, without the slightest hesitation, the widow of a pope and her children and the wife of a *diachok* or sexton.

Thus all the enumerated forms were generally divided according to the report of the starosta and the neighbors into three classes: those unquestionably hard up, some of whom ought to be admitted to the free table; those that were unquestionably well off, such as could support themselves; and thirdly, those concerning whom there was some question. This doubt was generally set-

tled by the number of people coming to the eating-room. To feed more than forty persons is no easy matter for the hosts. And therefore, if the number of those applying is less than forty, the doubtful ones are admitted; but if more, then some have to be turned away. Generally some persons unquestionably deserving of sustenance at the public tables seem left out, and according to the force of testimony changes and additions are made. If it is learned that in a village there are very many unquestionably needy persons, then a second and sometimes even a third eating-room is opened.

On the average, both at our establishments as well as at those of our neighbor, N. F., who is acting independently of us, the number of persons getting their meals at the public table always constitutes about one-third of all the effective population.

There are many — almost every householder — willing to keep the eating-room, that is, to bake bread, to cook, to boil, to serve the pensioners, in exchange for the right of having free food and fuel. To such a degree are they desirous of keeping the eating-rooms, that in both of the first villages where we established eating-rooms, the starostas, both of them rich peasants, proposed to have them at their houses. But as those that keep the eating-houses are guaranteed all fuel and food, we usually select the poorest, provided they live near the center of the hamlet, so that the distance to be traversed shall not be disproportionate in either direction. On the place itself we do not lay much stress, as even in a tiny six-arshin izba there is room enough to feed thirty or forty men.

The next thing to do is to get the food to each eating-room. It is managed in this way: In one place, taken as the central point of the institutions, there is arranged a storehouse of all necessary provisions. Such a storehouse was for us at first found in Rayevsky's "Ekonomia"; but as our work widened, three other storehouses were arranged, or rather selected, on the estates of wealthy landowners where there were granaries and some provisions for sale.

As soon as the location of the eating-room was selected and the persons privileged to avail themselves of it were inscribed on a list, the day was designated on which the keepers[1] of the eating-room or the cart whose turn it was should go for the provisions. As now in a large number of eating-rooms, it was a trouble to give out the provisions every day, two days each week — Tuesday and Friday — were set apart for that purpose. At the storehouse the keeper of the eating-room was given a little book or schedule in this form: —

Credit Book for Eating-Room No......

Month and Date.	At Whose House Opened.	Flour.	Bran.	Potatoes.	Cabbage.	Beets.	Oatmeal.	Wood.	Salt.	Number of Pensioners.
Nov. 20.	Lukerya Kolovaya	4 p.	2 p.	6 p.	30 heads	2 p.	1 p.	10 p.	10 lb.	

According to this book the provisions are received and entered. Besides the provisions, on a designated day from all the hamlets where the free tables are established come carts after fuel; at first this was peat, but now, as there is no more peat, firewood. On the same day the provisions are taken the loaves are made, and on the third day the eating-rooms are opened. The question as to the cooking utensils, the bowls, spoons, tables, is decided by the keepers of the rooms. Each eating-room keeper uses his own dishes. But if he has none, he gets them of those that come to him. Each person brings his own spoon.

The first eating-room was opened at the house of a blind old man who had a wife and orphan grandchildren. When, on the day it was opened, I went to this blind man's izba at eleven o'clock, the wife had everything all ready. The loaves had come out of the oven and were placed on the table and on the benches. On the stove, which was heated and closed, stood shchi, potatoes, and beet soup.

[1] *Khozyaeva.*

In the izba, besides the blind man and his wife, were two neighbors and a homeless old woman who had begged permission to come there so as to get something to eat and warm herself. There were no people as yet. It seemed that they were expecting us, and no announcements had been made. A boy and a muzhik were delegated to spread the news. I asked the woman how all would find seats.

"I will arrange it all satisfactorily, don't be troubled," said the woman.

This housekeeper was a thick-set woman of fifty, with timid and anxious, but intelligent, eyes. Until the opening of the eating-room she had begged, and had thus supported herself and her family. Her enemies declared that she drank too much. But, notwithstanding these reports, she attracted due favor by her attentions to her husband's orphan grandchildren, and to the blind old man himself, lying half dead with consumption on the sleeping-bunk.

The mother of the orphans had died the year before, the father had deserted them, and gone to Moscow, where he had disappeared. The children — a boy and a girl — were very pretty, especially the boy, who was about eight; and, notwithstanding their poverty, were well clothed and shod, and they clung to their grandmother, and kept asking things of her, as spoiled children generally do.

"All will be in good order," said the mistress of the house. "And I will get a table. And those that can't sit down may eat afterward. Nine loaves," she confided to me, "took four pounds, and moreover I squeezed out some kvas. Only I had a hard time with the peat," she said. "It doesn't heat. I had to get some of our own straw from the shed. I opened the shed, and then the peat would not burn."

As there was nothing for me to do there, I went behind the ravine to the eating-room of the next hamlet, fearing that they might be expecting me also there. And in reality they were waiting here also. And here was the same thing — the same odor of hot bread, the same round

loaves on the tables and benches, the same pots and kettles on the stove, and the same inquisitive people in the izba. In the same way the benevolent ran around to make the announcements.

Having talked with the mistress of the house, who also complained that the peat did not heat, and that she had split her trough in making the loaves, I went back to the first eating-room, thinking that I might find some misunderstanding or difficulty which might need regulating. I went to the blind man's. The izba was full of people, and was swarming with restrained motion like a beehive open on a summer night. Steam was pouring out of the door. There was an odor of bread and shchi, and the sound of eating was heard. The izba was tiny and dark with two diminutive windows, and on the outside a great heap of manure on both sides. The floor was of earth, very uneven. So dark, especially from the people obstructing the windows with their backs, that at first you could distinguish nothing.

But, notwithstanding these inconveniences and the narrow quarters, the meal was proceeding with the greatest good order. Along the front wall, at the left of the door, were two tables, around which on all sides the people eating sat in order. In the middle of the izba, from the outside wall to the stove was a bunk on which the emaciated blind man was, not lying as before, but sitting clasping his naked knees, listening to the conversation and the sounds of eating. At the right, in an empty corner before the stove door, stood the mistress of the house and her benevolent assistants. They were all watching the wants of the pensioners and serving them.

At the table in the front corner under the images stood the soldier of Nicholas's time, then an old man of the hamlet, then an old woman, then the children. At the second table nearer the stove, with their backs leaning against the wall, a pope's wife, withered looking, with children grouped around — boys and girls and the pope's daughter, a grown-up girl. On each table was a bowl of shchi, and the pensioners were taking sips of it, eating the fresh, savory bread with it. The cups of

shchi were emptied. "Eat your fill, eat your fill!" exclaimed the mistress of the house, gaily and hospitably, passing slices of bread over the heads. "There's still enough. .... To-day we have nothing but shchi and potatoes," said she to me; "there was not time for svekol'nik. We'll have it for dinner."

An old woman, scarcely alive, standing near the stove, asked me to give her some bread to carry home; she had managed to drag herself there that day, but she could not come every day, but her boy would be eating there and he could bring it to her. The mistress of the house cut her off a piece. The old woman stored it carefully away behind her apron and expressed her thanks, but she did not offer to go. The sexton's wife, a lively woman, standing near the stove and helping the mistress of the house, eloquently and vivaciously expressed her thanks for her daughter, who was also eating there, sitting near the partition, and timidly asked if she herself, the diachikha, might not eat there.

"It is long since I have tasted any pure bread; you see this is like sweet honey to us!"

Having received permission, the sexton's wife crossed herself, and crawled over the plank which was stretched from a stool to a bench. A boy, her neighbor on one side, and an old woman on the other made room and the diachikha sat down. The mistress of the house gave her bread and a spoon. After the first course of shchi, she had some potatoes. From the common salt-cellar each person took a little salt and heaped it up on the table and dipped the peeled potato into it.

All this — the service at the table and the acceptance of the food and the disposition of the people — was done with deliberation, politeness, and dignity, and at the same time in such a matter-of-fact way that it seemed as if it had always been done so, would be done so, and could not be done otherwise. There was something in it like a natural phenomenon.

Having finished his potatoes and carefully laid aside his remaining morsel of bread, the Nikolayevsky soldier was the first to get up and come out from behind the

table, and all the rest followed his example, turning to the images and saying their prayer; then uttering their thanks, they left the house. Those that were waiting their turn deliberately took their places, and the mistress again cut off the slices of bread, and once more filled up the cups with shchi.

Exactly the same thing took place at the second eating-room; the only peculiarity was that there were very many people — as many as forty — and the izba was still darker and smaller than the first. But there was the same politeness on the part of the pensioners, the same calm and joyous, somewhat proud, relation of the mistress to her work. Here a man served as master of ceremonies,[1] helping his mother, and the work went on faster.

And exactly the same thing took place at the other free tables established by us — there was the same elegance and naturalness. In some instances the zealous mistresses prepared three and even four courses: svekol'nik, shchi, pakhliobka,[2] and potatoes.

The work of the eating-rooms is accomplished with the same simplicity as many other of the muzhik's industries, in which all the details, even very complicated ones, are left to the peasants themselves. In the matter of transport, for example, in which muzhiks are employed, no employer ever bothers himself about the canvas coverings or the nails, or the linden baskets, or the buckets, and many other things essential for transport work. It is taken for granted that all this sort of thing will be provided by the peasants themselves; and in reality all this is always and everywhere uniformly and intelligently and simply done by the peasants themselves, who need no aid or direction from their employer.

Exactly the same thing occurred also at the free eating-rooms. All the details of the business were carried out by the keepers of the rooms themselves, and so

[1] *Khozyaïn.*

[2] *Svekol'nik* is a cold soup made with beets; *shchi* is a cabbage soup; *pakhliobka* is almost any kind of soup except shchi.

thoroughly and circumstantially that nothing was left for the inspector except the general business of the rooms. There were four such chief duties for the inspector of the eating-rooms to attend to: first, the getting of the provisions to a central location from which they could be distributed among the eating-rooms; secondly, care that the stores should not be wasted; thirdly, care that no persons among the most needy should be forgotten, and their places taken by those that could get along without free food; and fourthly, trial and use in the eating-rooms of new and little used means of alimentation, such as pease, lentils, millet, oats, barley, different kinds of bread, vegetables, and the like.

A sufficient number of workers furnished us with the list of people receiving rations. Some of the members of the families receiving insufficient quantity were admitted; some turned in their rations to the eating-rooms so as to have their meals there. In regard to this we were guided by the following considerations: in the uniform distribution as it was carried out in our locality, at the rate of twenty pounds to each person, we gave preference to the large families. In the insufficiency of the distribution these twenty pounds a month apiece the larger the family, the more entirely inadequate they were for the support of the people.

The theory of the free tables was therefore this: in order to open from ten to twenty eating-rooms, for the feeding of from three to eight hundred men, it is unavoidable in the center of this locality to collect the necessary provisions. In such a center there may always be the establishment of some opulent proprietor. Provisions for such a number, let us say five hundred men, will consist, — if it is proposed to keep up the eating-rooms till the season of first fruits, — reckoning by the pound of flour mixed with bran for each person for three hundred days, will be one hundred and fifty thousand pounds for five hundred persons, or three thousand seven hundred and fifty puds, or two thousand five hundred puds of rye and one thousand two hundred and

fifty of bran; the same amount of potatoes, twelve sazhens[1] of wood, a thousand puds of beets, and twenty-five puds of salt, two thousand heads of cabbage, and eight hundred puds of oatmeal.

The cost of all this at present prices amounts to fifty-eight hundred rubles. That is to say, with the increase of expense for oaten kisel at the rate of one ruble sixteen kopeks a person.

Having established such a storehouse, around it, at a distance of from seven to eight versts, one can open as many as twenty eating-rooms which will be supplied at this center. It is necessary to open the eating-rooms first of all in the very poorest of communities. It is necessary to select a place for this eating-room at the house of one of the very poorest inhabitants. The dishes and everything needed for the preparation of the food and the tables must be furnished by the person who keeps the eating-room. The list of persons admissible to the free tables must be made up with the assistance of the village starosta, and if possible of well-to-do peasants whose families are not represented among those applying for aid. The supervision of the eating-rooms, should there be very many of them, may be intrusted to the peasants themselves. But it is a matter of course that in proportion to the direct part in the matter taken by those that open the tables, the closer will be their relations both to the keepers of them and to those that frequent them, the better the business will go, the less waste of money there will be, the less dissatisfaction, the better the food, and, above all, the more cheery will be the disposition of the people.

But it may be boldly said that even under the most distant supervision, even when they are intrusted to the people themselves, the eating-rooms will satisfy great needs, and by reason of throwing the supervision on the interested parties, the needless waste of provisions will never amount to more than ten per cent, if you can call needless waste the bread which the people carry home with them, or share with those that have none.

[1] A cubic *sazhen* of wood is 2.68 cords.

Such is the plan of establishing free tables, and every one who wishes to make a trial of it will see how easily and naturally this is accomplished.

The advantages and disadvantages of the free eating-rooms are as follows: —

The first disadvantage of the free eating-rooms is that provisions in them cost a little more than in the hand-to-hand distribution of flour. If relief amounts even to thirty pounds of flour to each consumer, then in the eating-rooms you must reckon on the same thirty pounds, and besides, the soups, potatoes, beets, salt, fire, and now also oatmeal. This disadvantage, apart from the fact that the eating-rooms provide for people more than hand-to-hand distribution, has its compensation in this, that by the introduction of new, cheap, and wholesome articles of diet, such as lentils, pease in various forms, oat-kisel, beets, Indian meal kasha, sunflower and hemp oils, the quantity of bread used may be diminished and the food itself improved. A second disadvantage is that the eating-rooms keep from starvation only some of the feebler members of a family, and not the young and average peasant, who does not frequent the free table on the ground that it is humiliating for him. So that in the designation of those that are subject to support at the free tables, the peasants always exclude grown-up lads and girls on the ground that it would be disgraceful to them. This disadvantage has its compensation in the fact that precisely this sense of shame at accepting charity at the free tables prevents the possibility of misusing them. A peasant, for example, comes with the request for a share in the rations, and declares that he has not had anything to eat for two days. He is invited to come into the eating-room. His face turns red and he declines to do so, while a peasant of the same age, being left without resources and unable to find work, will take his place in the eating-room.

Or another example: a woman complains of her condition and asks rations. They propose to her that she send her daughter. But her daughter is already a promised bride, and the woman refuses to send her.

But meantime the bride-daughter of the priest's wife, of whom I have spoken, comes to the eating-room.

The third disadvantage, and the most serious, is that some of the feeble, the old, and the little ones, and very ragged children, cannot get to the eating-room, especially in bad weather. This inconvenience is obviated by neighbors or those from the same farm carrying the food to those unable to be present.

I know no other disadvantages or inconveniences.

The advantages of the free tables are the following: —

The food is incomparably better and more varied than that which is prepared in families. There is opportunity of getting food-stuffs cheaper and wholesomer. The food is provided at much cheaper rates. Fuel for baking loaves is saved. The poorest of families — those at whose houses the free tables are established — are perfectly provided for. Any possibility of inequality in receiving food, such as is often found in families in relation to unloved members, is done away with; the aged and children receive food proportioned to their needs. The eating-rooms induce kindly feelings instead of dissensions and hatred. Abuses, that is, the acceptance of help by such persons as are less needy, will be found less frequent than in any other form of help. The limits of the abuses, which can be found in taking advantage of the free tables, is confined to the capacity of a stomach. A man may carry off as much flour as he can, but no one can eat more than a very limited quantity.

And the chief and most important advantage of the eating-rooms, for which, if for nothing else, they can and should be established, is that in that community where there are free tables no man can get sick or die from the lack or wretchedness of food; nor can there be, what unfortunately is constantly happening over and over again, that an old man, feeble, a sick child, to-day, by taking poor or insufficient food, languishes, pines away, and dies, if not absolutely from hunger, yet from the lack of good food. And this is the most important.

Lately, wishing to avoid the discussions which arose when the eating-rooms were first opened, as to who should have admittance to them and who not, we took advantage, at a newly opened eating-room, of the throng that was attracted by the affair, and proposed to the peasants to decide for themselves who should be admitted. The first opinion expressed by many was that is was impossible, that there would be disputes and quarrels, and they would never come to a decision. Then the proposition was made that one person from every dvor might be admitted. But this proposition was quickly put aside. There were homes where no one would need to come, and there were others where there was not one, but several, feeble members. And therefore they agreed to accept our proposal, to leave it to their consciences.

"Places will be prepared for forty persons, and whoever comes — 'we beg your pardon, but everything is eaten up' — you won't get anything."

They accepted this plan. One said that he was a healthy, strong man, and was ashamed to come and eat up the portion of orphans. To this, however, one discontented voice replied: "You would not go away happy, no, you would go away unhappy, if, like me a little while ago, you had not had anything to eat for two days."

This very thing constitutes the chief advantage of the free tables. Any one whosoever, whether inscribed or not inscribed in the peasant society, household peasant, soldier's son, soldier of Nicholas's or Alexander's time, priest's wife, burgess, noble, old, young, or healthy muzhik, lazy or industrious, a drunkard or sober, but having gone two days without eating, would receive the food of the commune. In this is the chief advantage of the free tables. Wherever they are no one can either die of hunger or, being hungry, can be compelled to work. Everything you can think of can be a stimulus to work, but not starvation. You can train animals by starving them, and compel them to do things contrary to their nature; but it is time to realize that it is shame-

ful to compel men by starving them to do what they do not wish to do, but what we wish them to do.

But is it possible to establish eating-rooms everywhere? Is this a general measure which may be applied universally and on a great scale?

At first it would seem that it was not, that it was only a partial, local, accidental measure, which might be applied only in certain places where men were found especially adapted to this sort of thing. So I thought at first, when I imagined that for such an eating-room one would have to hire a place and a cook, to buy the dishes, to plan and to foresee what kind of food and when and for how many persons one would have to prepare; but the form of free eating-rooms which, thanks to I. I. Rayevsky, have now been established, did away with all these difficulties and made this measure most effectual, simple, and popular.

With our small resources and without special effort, we opened and started, within four weeks, in twenty localities, thirty eating-rooms at which about fifteen hundred persons got their meals. Our neighbor N—— F—— alone in the course of a month opened and is conducting in the same conditions sixteen eating-rooms at which not less than seven hundred persons are fed.

The opening of eating-rooms and superintending them present no difficulties; their support costs only a little more than the distribution of flour, if it is given out in the quantity of thirty pounds a month.[1]

This measure of establishing eating-rooms, not arousing any bad feelings in the people, but, on the contrary, perfectly satisfying them, attains the chief object which now faces society — the guaranteeing people against the possibility of dying of hunger; and, therefore, it ought to be adopted everywhere. If the authorities of the zemstvo, the guardians and the administration, can

[1] We had not yet learned by experience, but we took for granted that the support of one man at the free table would not in any case exceed one ruble fifty kopeks a month. — AUTHOR'S PARENTHETICAL NOTE IN TEXT.

persuade themselves of the need of the peasantry, and, supplying bread, give it to the needy, then incomparably the least troublesome method would be for the same people to provide *dépôts* for provisioning the free tables, and free tables as well.

A few days since we were visited by a native of Kaluga, who brought to our place the following proposition: Some of the landed proprietors and peasants of the Kaluga government, rich in feed for their cattle, sympathizing with the situation of the peasants in our region who were obliged to part with their horses at a very low price, and not likely to be able to buy them at ten times the price the following spring, proposed to take for the winter for their board ten wagons — that is to say, eighty horses — from our region. The horses should be accompanied by certain trusty men from the hamlets from which the horses were taken, to take them there and then come back. In the spring they would go for the horses and fetch them home.

The day following this proposition, in two hamlets where it was explained, all the eighty horses, all young and good, were entered for the transfer, and every day, from that time forth, peasants kept coming, begging that their horses also might be taken.

Nothing could be a stronger or more decisive answer to the question whether there is famine or not, and in what proportions. There must be great need when peasants so easily give up their horses, trusting them to strangers. Moreover this proposition and its acceptance was to me peculiarly touching and instructive. The peasants of Kaluga, not wealthy people, for the sake of brother peasants, strangers to them, people whom they had never seen, out of pity take upon themselves no small expense and labor and trouble; and the peasants of this locality, evidently understanding the impulse of their Kaluga brethren, evidently conscious that in case of need they would have done the same, without the slightest hesitation intrust to strangers almost their last possession, their good young horses, for which even at

present prices they might get as much as five, ten, or fifteen rubles.

If even a hundredth part of such vital brotherly conscience, of such unity of men in the name of God, were in all men, how easily, yet not only easily, but also joyfully, we should endure this famine and all other material misfortunes.

Byegitchevko, Dankovsky District,
December 8, 1891.

HELP FOR THE STARVING

(JANUARY, 1892)

I

THE questions, whether there is famine in Russia or not, and if there is, to what an extent, remain as yet unanswered. As an answer to them let a description of what I have seen and heard in four districts of the Government of Tula, suffering from failure of the crops, suffice.

The first district I visited was Krapivensky, which is suffering in its black earth belt.

The first impression, answering in its fundamental sense the question whether the population finds itself this year in especially trying circumstances, was the fact that the bread used by almost all was adulterated with lebeda-weed, in proportions of one-third, and in some cases one-half, lebeda, black bread of inky blackness, heavy and bitter. This bread was eaten by all — children and pregnant women and nursing mothers and sick people.

The second impression, pointing to the peculiarity of the situation this year, is the general complaint of the lack of fuel. At that time — it was still in the early part of September — people had nothing to warm themselves with. It was said that they had cut up the young sprouts on the threshing-floors, and I myself saw that; it was said they had cut down and split up for fire-wood all the posts, everything that was of wood. Many bought wood in the clearing of a proprietor's forest and in the grove which ran in that vicinity. They would go from

seven to ten versts after fire-wood. The cost of split aspen wood was ninety kopeks per shkalik, that is to say, for one-sixteenth of a cubic sazhen.[1]

The shkalik lasts a peasant's establishment about a week, so that his fuel for the winter, if he has to buy it, will stand him about twenty-five rubles.

The poverty is beyond question: the bread is unwholesome mixed with lebeda-weed, and they have no fuel. But if you look at the people and judge from externals, their faces look healthy, cheerful, and contented. All are at work; no one is at home. One is threshing, another teaming. The proprietors complain because they cannot get people to work for them. When I was there, the digging of potatoes and threshing was going on. On the church festival there was more drinking than usual, and even on working-days there was much drunkenness. Moreover, the bread itself, made with lebeda-weed, when you examine why and how it is used, receives another significance.

At the farm where I was first shown bread made with lebeda-weed, in the back-yard the man's own threshing-machine was threshing for four horses, and there were sixty ricks of oats on his own land and that which he hired, yielding at the rate of nine measures, that is to say, at the present prices three rubles.

Rye, it is true, was scarce — he had only about eight chetverts — but besides the oats he had at least forty chetverts of potatoes, and buckwheat also. Yet the whole family, consisting of twelve souls, ate lebeda-weed bread. So that it seemed that, in this case at least, the lebeda-weed bread was not a symptom of poverty, but a stern old man's measure of economy, so that they might eat less bread; since with this end in view even in plentiful years the economical muzhik never gives any warm food or even soft bread, but always stale crusts.

"Flour is high; so why should you waste it on these rascals? People eat bread made with lebeda-weed, then why should we try to be such noblemen?"

The lack of fuel finds compensation in the fact that

[1] A cubic sazhen is 2.68 cords.

this year, although there is less straw than usual, yet it is grassy, with small ears, and makes excellent fodder. That they do not use straw for fuel is not only because it is so scarce, but because this year it partly takes the place of the meal usually given to cattle.

This was so where there was any straw at all. But in many districts there was no straw at all.

The situation of the majority of the farms under a superficial observation is such that the failure of the rye crop finds its compensation in the good crop of oats, which bring a high price, and in a good crop of potatoes. They sell oats, they buy rye, and feed principally on potatoes.

But not all have oats and potatoes. When I made a list of the whole locality, it seemed that out of fifty-seven dvors there were twenty-nine where no rye was left, or only a few puds — from five to eight — and little oats, so that in an exchange at the rate of two chetverts for one chetvert of rye, there would not be enough food to last them till Christmas. Such was the case in twenty-nine dvors.

Fifteen were in a very bad condition. These dvors were bad, not from the bad harvests this year, but from the perpetual conditions of their lives, both inwardly and outwardly, from their isolation, their lack of strength, and the feebleness of the character of the housekeepers; and these have been wretched even in previous years. These dvors had not this year their principal means of support — oats, as they had no seeds and the soil was exhausted. Even now some of them are begging. Approximately as bad off are other villages of the Krapivensky District suffering from the bad harvests. The percentage of the rich, of the middling well-to-do, and of the wretched is almost one and the same: fifty-nine per cent or thereabouts of the middling well-to-do, that is to say of those who this year will eat up all their provisions by Christmas; twenty per cent of the rich, and thirty per cent of the perfectly wretched, who either now or within a month will have nothing to eat.

The situation of the peasants of the Bogoroditsky

District is worse. The harvest, especially that of rye, was worse here. Here the percentage of the rich, that is of those who can subsist on their own bread, is the same; but the percentage of the utterly destitute is greater: out of sixty dvors, seventeen middling, thirty-two utterly destitute, corresponding to the fifteen utterly destitute in the first locality of the Krapivensky District. And exactly as in the Krapivensky District, the poverty-stricken condition of these destitute dvors depended, not on the famine of this year alone, but on a whole series of both internal and external conditions long in operation, the same isolation, large families, weakness of character. ....

Here in the Bogoroditsky District the question of fuel was still more difficult to decide, as the forests were sparser. But the general impression was the same as in the Krapivensky District. As yet, there was nothing peculiar indicating famine; the people were alert, industrious, gay, healthy. The clerk of the volost complained that drunkenness in Uspenye, the chief city, was more pronounced than ever.

The farther one penetrated into the depths of the Bogoroditsky District and the nearer to the Yefremovsky, the worse grew the situation. In the threshing-floors grain and straw kept diminishing, and there were more and more abodes of destitution. On the borders of the Yefremovsky and Bogoroditsky districts the situation was particularly bad, because, in addition to all the misfortunes such as befell the Krapivensky and Bogoroditsky districts, and besides, the sparsity of forests, the potato crop had failed. There were scarcely any; even on the best soil only a return of seed was produced. In almost all families bread adulterated with lebeda-weed was used. The lebeda here failed to ripen, it was green. Of that white substance which is generally found in it, there was not a trace, and therefore it is not fit to eat. Bread of lebeda-weed it is impossible to eat alone. If it is eaten on an empty stomach it causes vomiting. People grow crazy from the kvas made from flour mixed with lebeda-weed.

Here there are poverty-stricken dvors which, having been greatly reduced in previous years, have eaten up everything.

But even this is not the worst locality. Worse ones are in the Yefremovsky and Yepifansky districts. Here is a large neighborhood in the Yefremovsky District. Out of seventy homes there are ten which are still self-supporting. The rest have just gone to begging on horseback! Those that are left eat bread mixed with lebeda-weed or with bran, which is sold to them at the storehouse of the zemstvo at the rate of sixty kopeks a pud.

I went into one house to see the bread made with bran. The muzhik had received three measures for seed, when he had already done his sowing, and mixing these three measures with three measures of bran, ground it together, and the result was sufficiently good bread, but it was his last.

The woman told me how her daughter had eaten bread made with lebeda-weed, and it had caused vomiting and diarrhea, and she had ceased to cook that kind of bread. The main room of the izba was full of horse-dung and fagots. The women go to the pasture to collect dung, and to the forest to get bits of twigs as long and as thick as their finger. The filth of the habitations, the raggedness of the clothing, in this neighborhood was very great; but it could be seen that it was nothing new, because it was the same even in the better homes. In this neighborhood there was a little cluster of ten dvors occupied by soldiers' children who had land.

At the last hovel of this cluster where we stopped, a thin, ragged woman came out to us, and began to tell us her condition. She had five children. The oldest daughter was ten. Two were sick — it must have been from the influenza. A three-year-old child was sick in a high fever, had been brought outdoors, and lay on the bare ground, on the pasture, eight paces from the hovel, and covered by the ragged remains of a cloak. It was thirsty, and would be chilly as soon as the fever passed,

but still it was better off than it would have been in the tiny hovel with a heated stove, the filth, the dust, and the other four children.

This woman's husband had gone off somewhere and disappeared. She subsisted and fed her sick children on crusts which she got by begging. But it was hard for her to beg, because her neighbors had little to give. She had to wander away twenty or thirty versts and abandon her children. If she got crusts she would remain at home, and, when they began to fail her, she would start out again.

Now she was at home. She had come that afternoon, and she had brought enough crusts to last till the next day after. In such a condition she had been for two years, and things were much worse off than they had been, because this third year she had been burnt out, and her eldest girl was away, so that there was no one with whom to leave the little ones. The only difference was that they kept eating more and more of the bread mixed with lebeda-weed. And she was not the only one as bad off. In this condition, not only this year, but always, are all the families of weak, drinking men, all families of those in jail. Such a state of things is more easily borne in good years.

II

THERE are many such neighborhoods as this, both in the Bogoroditsky and the Yefremovsky districts. But there are still worse ones. And such neighborhoods are found in the Yepifansky and Dankovsky districts.

Here is one of them. Along the six versts from one locality to the other there is no village or habitation — only the farms of proprietors are to be seen. Between steep banks, a large beautiful river; on both sides, settlements. On one side that belonging to the Yepifansky District, the smaller; on the other that belonging to the Dankovsky, the larger. Yonder is a church with a bell-tower, and a cross glittering in the sun. Along

the hill on this side extend, in the distance, the pretty little houses of the peasants.

I approach the edge of the settlement on this side. The first izba is not an izba, but four stone walls, of gray stone laid in clay, covered with a ceiling on which are spread potato leaves. There is no yard.[1] This is the dwelling of the first family. There, in the middle of this residence, stands a cart without wheels; and not back of the yard where the threshing-floor generally is, but directly in front of the izba, is a small cleared place, called a *tok*, where the oats are threshed and winnowed. A tall muzhik in bark shoes, with a shovel and his hands, is shoveling the newly winnowed oats from a pile into plaited seed-baskets; a barefooted peasant woman of fifty, in a filthy black skirt torn at the side, is carrying these baskets away and setting them into the wheelless cart, and keeping count. An unkempt little girl of seven, in a skirt gray with grime, clings to the woman, hampering her. The muzhik is the woman's neighbor, who has come over to help her winnow and garner the oats. The woman is a widow; her husband has been dead two years, and her son has gone to the army for the autumn drill. In the ibza is the daughter-in-law with her two little children, one a baby at the breast, the other, two years old, with bare legs, is sprawling on the threshold and screaming — something discontents him.

The whole harvest of this year consists of oats, all of which is stored in the cart, and amounts to four chetverts — about twenty-three bushels. Of rye, for seed, there remained, carefully stored away in the *pun'ka*, or grain-closet, one bag mixed with lebeda-weed — about three puds. No millet, no buckwheat, no lentils, no potatoes, had been planted or sowed. The bread they used was made with lebeda-weed, and it was so bad it was impossible to eat it; and on the morning of this particular day, the woman had gone begging to the village — eight versts. In the village it was a festival, and she had collected five pounds of pieces of pirog free of the lebeda-weed. She showed it to me. In a linden-bark basket

[1] *Dvor.*

were collected four pounds of crusts and pieces as big as one's palm. This was her whole property and all her visible means of support.

Another izba was the same, only a little better protected and had a small court. The crop of rye was the same. The same bag with lebeda-weed stood in the entry and represented the granary with stores. At this place they had not sowed oats at all, as they had had no seed in the spring. They had three chetverts of potatoes and there were two measures of millet. To the rye which was left over from the distribution for seed, the woman had added an equal quantity of lebeda-weed, and they were using it for food. A slice and a half of it was left. With potatoes, they said they might get along for a month, but what remained for them after that they did not know. The woman had four children and a husband. The husband, when I was at the izba, was not at home. He had built the hut, laying the stone in clay. He was at a neighbor's at the next dvor.

The third place was the same, the condition the same. While I was there and talking with the mistress of the establishment, another woman came in and began to relate to her neighbor how her husband had been beaten, how she did not expect to have him live, and how they had administered the last communion to him that morning. Evidently the neighbor knew it all long before, and it was repeated for my benefit. I proposed to come and look at the ailing man and help him, if there was any possible way. The woman went out and speedily returned to show me the way. The sick man lay in the next izba. This izba was large, timbered, with a stone *pun'ka*, or grain-room, and a yard. But the destitution was the same. The owner, evidently, had been tempted to build after a fire. That is all he had done. He had built, then he had taken sick and been reduced to beggary. Two other families, unrelated and homeless, had lodgings in this izba. The head of one of these families was also stricken with illness.

On a bunk between the stove and the wall lay the sick man, covered with a corn-cloth, and groaning piteously.

I went to him and cautiously turned back the covering. He was a thick-set, healthy muzhik of forty, with a bloodstained face and well-developed muscles on his bare arm. I proceeded to question him, and he, striving to groan, in a feeble voice told me that three days before they had held a reunion and he and a comrade had taken *billets*, passports, to go down the river, and then he had told one of the muzhiks that he ought not to swear; and in reply to this the muzhik had knocked him down and "walked all over him"; that is, had given him a regular trouncing, striking him on his head and on his chest. It seemed that, having taken out their passports, they had bought liquor on shares; and then the former starosta, squandering fifty rubles of the commune's funds, treated them to one-half a *vedro*, or bucket, because they postponed the payment for three terms, and the peasants got drunk.

I felt of the wounded man and examined him. He was perfectly well, and was perspiring powerfully under his covering. There were no marks on him, and evidently he was in bed and they had given him the Holy Communion in order to induce the authorities, one of whom he supposed me to be, to inflict punishment on the man with whom he had quarreled. When I told him that he need not be tried, and that I thought he was not dangerously beaten and might get up, he remained discontented, and the women, who had attentively followed me and filled the izba to overflowing, began with displeasure to remark that, if that were so, then *they* would beat them all to death.

The poverty of all these three families living here was as absolute as in the first dvors. No one had any rye. One had two pounds of buckwheat; another had enough potatoes to last a fortnight or a month. All had still a little bread made of rye mixed with lebeda-weed, but not enough to last any length of time.

The people were almost all at home. One was plastering his house, another was rebuilding his, another was sitting still, doing nothing. All the threshing had been done; the potatoes were all dug.

Such was the whole village of thirty places, with the exception of two families which were in easy circumstances. This village had been half burned down the year before, and had not been rebuilt. The first dvor, with the woman threshing oats, and eight others had been immediately settled in a new place on the outskirts, so as to fulfil the rules of insurance. The majority are so poor that, so far, they are living in lodgings. In the same condition of feebleness are also those that had not been burnt out, though those that had been burnt out are, on the whole, rather worse off. The condition of the village is such, that out of thirty dvors twelve have no horses.

The village is in destitute condition, but it is evident that the failure of this year's harvest is not the principal misfortune. In almost every family, its special cause is something far more significant than the misfortune of this year's crop.

The misfortune of the former starosta is that he has to pay fifty rubles in three instalments, and he is selling all his oats to pay this debt. The present starosta, an excellent carpenter, had the special misfortune that he had been appointed to that office and cannot go out to work. His salary is fifteen rubles a year, and he declares that he could easily earn sixty, and would not mind the failure of the harvest.

A third muzhik has the misfortune of having got into debt long ago, and now the time to pay it has come, and he has been obliged to sell the three walls of his wooden izba, leaving himself one for fuel. Now he has nothing to live in, and he is constructing for himself, out of stone, a tiny cell in which he will live with his wife and children.

A fourth has the misfortune of having quarreled with his mother, who had been living with him, and she has left him, dismantled her izba, and gone to another son, taking her share with her. And he had nowhere to live and nothing to live on.

Still a fifth has the misfortune of having gone to the city with oats, where, in a spree, he had spent for drink

all that he got for his oats. The universal, chronic causes of poverty are also many times more powerful than the poor crops. As always, conflagrations, quarrels, drunkenness, low spirits. ....

Before taking my departure from the village, I stopped near one who had just brought from the field some potato vines — *botovya* they call them — and who was piling them up against the walls of his izba. Quickly six muzhiks also came up, and we had a talk. Their women stood listening at a little distance. Children munching inky black, sticky bread made with lebeda-weed were running around us, gazing at me, and trying to catch a word. I repeated several questions, crediting the starosta's testimony. It all seemed credible. Even the number of those without horses proved to be greater than the starosta had claimed. They related the whole story of their poverty, not with any satisfaction, but with a certain irony. "Why is it that you are so wretched; have you become poorer than other people?" I asked.

Several answered at once in various voices, so definite was the reply.

"But what shall we do? In the summer half the village was burned up as a cow licks dew with her tongue. And then the crop failed. And the summer was bad, and now to-day we are all cleaned out."

"Well, how are you going to live?"

"We shall live all right. We shall sell what we have, and then whatever God gives."

What does this mean? Can it be that these men do not in reality understand their condition, or do they so hope for aid from outside that they do not want to put forth any effort? I may be mistaken, but it seems like this.

And here I remembered two somewhat intoxicated old muzhiks of the Yefremovsky District, who were coming from the volost headquarters, where they had gone to ask when they would employ their sons for the autumn drill; and at my question how their harvest had been and how they got along, they replied, notwithstand-

ing that they were from the very wretchedest locality, that, glory to God, they had distributed seed for sowing, and now they would continue to distribute grain also for provisions, till Lent at the rate of thirty pounds a man, and after Lent at the rate of a pud and a half. Why, the fact that the people of this Yefremovsky village cannot live through the winter unless they undertake something, is as palpable as that a hive of bees without honey, left for the winter, will die before spring. But this is the very question: Shall they undertake anything or not? So far it is likely that they will not. Only one of them sold all that he had and went to Moscow. The rest apparently do not realize their situation. Do they really not comprehend their situation, or are they waiting for help from outside, or do they, like children who have slipped into an ice-hole or lost their way, in the first moment, not comprehending all the dangers of their situation, find amusement in its unusualness? Maybe both are true. But it is unquestionable that these people are in a condition where they make scarcely any effort to help themselves.

III

Well, then, is there famine or is there not famine? And if there is, in what degree? And in what degree must help be given? All the columns in which the possessions of the peasants are entered give no answer, and can give no answer, to these questions.

Many represent to themselves the task of feeding the starving people exactly as they will represent to themselves the same task of feeding a given number of cattle. For so many oxen they need for two hundred winter days so many puds of hay, straw, malt, grain. They get ready this amount of feed, furnish it for the herd of cattle, and have the assurance that the creatures will weather the winter. With human beings the calculation is entirely different.

In the first place, for the ox and all kinds of cattle, the minimum and maximum of indispensable food are

not very far separate from each other. Having eaten their necessary amount of feed, cattle cease to eat, and that is all that is required for them; but if they do not have all they need, they soon sicken and die.

For a human being the difference between the minimum and the maximum of what he requires — not only as regards food, but other necessities also — is enormous. A man may live on wafers like the fasters, on a handful of rice like the Chinese, may go without food for forty days like Dr. Tanner, and preserve his health; and he may swallow down enormous quantities of costly and nutritious food and drink, and besides this bodily sustenance he requires many things besides, which may wax to great proportions and be limited to very narrow ones.

In the second place, the ox in the stall cannot earn its own feed; while a man does earn his food, and that man whom we are proposing to feed is the chief earner of food, the very one who in the most difficult conditions earns what we are preparing to feed him with. To feed a muzhik is just the same as in springtime, when the grass is pushing and the cattle can already crop it, to keep the creatures in the stall and pull up this grass for them; in other words, to deprive the herd of that enormous power of crop-gathering, and thereby ruin it.

Something analogous would happen with the muzhik if we proceeded to feed him in the same way, and he should believe in this.

The muzhik's budget does not meet the requirements — there is a deficit, he has nothing to live on — he must be fed.

Now, if you feed every average muzhik, not in a famine year, but in an ordinary year, when as in our localities, in these very localities where there is famine, often the grain from the allotted land will not last till Christmas, you will see that in ordinary years, according to the returns of the harvest, he will have nothing to live upon, and the deficit will be such that he will infallibly have to kill his cattle and have only one meal a day himself. Such is the budget of the average muzhik — of the destitute there is nothing to be said; but, lo! he not only

does not kill his cattle, but he has married off his son or his daughter, celebrated a festival, and smoked up five rubles' worth of tobacco.

Who has not seen conflagrations that cleaned everything up? It would seem as if the sufferers were utterly ruined. Lo, and behold! one is helped by a kinsman, an uncle; some one furnishes a jug, another takes a place as a laborer and another goes a-begging; much energy is put out, and lo! within two years they are no worse off than they were before.

But how about emigrants, who go with their families, subsisting for years on their labor while lacking any definite place of settlement? At one time I was occupied with the question of a former settlement of the Samara border. And it is a fact, which all the old inhabitants of Samara can substantiate, that the majority of the emigrants who were assisted as they came along the main traveled roads went to ruin and poverty, while the majority of the deserters reached their journey's end, and settled down successfully, and became rich. But how about landless peasants, household servants, soldiers' children? All have been supported, and are supported, even in years when bread was higher than it is now. They say there is no work. But here are others who keep saying that they have work to offer, but there are no workmen. And the men who say this are just as correct, or just as incorrect, as those that complain that there is no work. I know definitely that proprietors have offered work but no laborers came; that, to the work furnished by the forestry commission, so far, no laborers appeared; and this is true also of other undertakings described in the newspapers.

For a miserable workman there is never any work, but for a good workman there is always work. It is true this year there is less work than usual, and therefore more poor workmen remain without work; but still, whether a man has work or not depends, not on any external causes, but on the workman's energy — on whether he seeks work wisely, is eager for work, and works well.

I say all this, not for the purpose of proving that we ought not to help miserable workmen and their families, — on the contrary, they need help most of all, — but only to show how impossible it is to reckon the budget of a peasant's home, the income of which may be stretched from three to thirty and more rubles a month, according to the peasant's energy in seeking and satisfying employment, while the outgo may be curtailed to two pounds of meal a day with bran for each person, and wasted in a luxury capable of ruining the richest muzhik in a year's time.

The difference of opinion as to whether there is famine or not, and to what a degree, arises from the fact that as a basis for estimating the peasant's situation they take his property, whereas the chief items of his budget are determined, not by his property, but his labor.

In order to determine the degree of poverty which might be taken as a guide in distributing aid, there were placed in all the zemstvos throughout the volost'-districts specific inventories containing lists of consumers, laborers, land allotments; the quality of different grains sowed, and the crops, the number of cattle, the average harvest, and many other things. These lists were made up with an extraordinary wealth of columns and particulars. But any one who knows the peasants' ways of housekeeping, knows that these lists tell very little. To think that the peasant household receives only what it gets from the allotted land, and spends only on what it eats, is a great mistake. In the majority of cases what is got from the allotted land constitutes only a small part of what it receives. The peasant's chief wealth is what he and his household earn by working — whether they earn it on hired land, or by laboring for some proprietor, or by living out at service, or by various vocations. Why, the muzhik and his family all are working always. The condition of physical idleness is misery for the muzhik. If there is not work enough for all the members of the muzhik's family, if he himself and his people are eating, but not working, he con-

siders that he has reached absolute poverty, just as if from a shrunken keg the wine leaks, and generally by all possible means he seeks and always finds some way of warding off this poverty — he finds work. In a muzhik's family all the members work from childhood to old age, and support themselves by work. A lad of twelve already earns something as a shepherd-boy or in the care of horses; the little girl spins and knits stockings or little mittens; the muzhik goes out to service either at some distant provincial city, or works as a day laborer, or works on shares for some proprietor, or himself hires land; the old man plaits bark shoes, and that is a very common resource.

Then besides, there are extraordinary cases: a lad leads the blind, a girl gets a place as a nurse with some rich muzhik, a boy is taken to learn a trade, the muzhik presses bricks or makes seed baskets, the woman practises as a midwife or as a doctor, a blind brother begs, one who has got learning reads the psalter for the dead, the old man rubs tobacco, some widow sells vodka. Moreover a peasant's son may get a place as a coachman, a conductor, an *uryadnik*, or village policeman; or his daughter may become a chambermaid or a nurse; another's uncle becomes a monk or an overseer, and all these relations take hold and help support the establishment. From such items, not entered on the lists, comes the principal income of a peasant's family.

The items of expenditure are still more varied, and are by no means confined to provisions: taxes of various kinds, regulation of army service, firearms, blacksmith work, plowshares, bolts, wheels, axes, forks, parts of harnesses and carts, buildings, stoves, clothing, footgear for himself and his children, holidays, the sacraments for himself and his family, weddings, christenings, funerals, doctor's hire, gifts for his children, tobacco, kitchen utensils, dining-room ware, salt, tar, kerosene, pilgrimages.

Every man, moreover, has his own peculiarities of character, his weaknesses, his charities, his vices, which cost him money. In the very poorest families of five

or six souls, from fifty to seventy rubles a year, in an opulent family from seventy to three hundred, in an average family from one hundred to one hundred and twenty, are thus involved. And every householder can without very much increase of energy make this hundred rubles' income one hundred and fifty, and by some slackening of energy reduce it from one hundred to fifty, and by economy and close calculation reduce a hundred rubles of expenditure to sixty, and by slackness and inefficiency increase it from a hundred to two hundred.

How then in these circumstances reckon the budget of a muzhik, and decide the question whether he is suffering from poverty or not, and to what a degree, and if he is, to decide which of them is to be helped and how much?

In the zemstvos inspectors have been appointed — persons whose duty it was to administer the distribution of help among the volost'-districts. In one of the zemstvos there have been instituted councils held by the inspectors, — of priests, the *starshina*, or head man of the village, the ecclesiastical starosta, and to delegates, — and these were to decide who were to be helped. But even these councils could not help in the matter of distribution, because, according to the lists and what is now known of peasant families, it is impossible to tell in advance those who will be needy; and therefore regularly to determine gratuitous assistance for the people is not merely difficult, but quite impossible.

Many think that if only the wealthy would give the poor a part of their riches, all would be beautiful. But this is a great mistake. Try to give money to the poor in the city, and they will try even this. And what will be the result?

Seven years ago in Moscow, by the will of a deceased tradesman, six thousand rubles were distributed among the poor, giving two to each. Such a crowd collected that two were crushed to death, and the largest part of the money got into the hands of healthy pleaders, while the poor and the weak got nothing.

The same thing results and will result also in the country, and wherever money is distributed as a gratuity. It is generally thought that all it requires is to distribute it, but to distribute and to determine is not easy. Let us allow, they generally think, that there are abuses and deceptions, but we must be on the lookout for such, take care to investigate, and then one can get rid of those that do not need, and give only to the destitute.

In this also there is an error. The essence of the matter is such that it cannot be done. To distribute gratuitous help among the needy only is impossible because there are no external marks whereby one could determine the needy, and the distribution of gratuities itself elicits the most evil passions, so that even those signs which were, are annihilated.

The administration and the zemstvo are engaged in trying to find out those that are really needy. All muzhiks, even those that are not at all destitute, knowing that there is going to be a gratuitous distribution, try to seem destitute, and even make themselves so, in order to get help without working for it. All are aware that to gain by means of labor is good and praiseworthy — without labor is bad and shameful. And suddenly appears a method of obtaining without labor and free from anything reprehensible. Evidently such a confusion in ideas is produced by the appearance of this new way of getting.

But how can we wait when they are dying of starvation? Here in the country, where there is no grain till next November, and where, through laziness, errors of judgment, or what not, the muzhiks declare there is no work and they are not working; within a week's time unquestionably actual starvation confronts the women, the aged, and the young, and possibly the laziest and most mistaken, but actually living people.

Evidently it is impossible not to give; but if we give, how shall we give, to whom shall we give?

If we give to all as the peasants everywhere demand, claiming, with reason, that they must be answered by a reciprocal bond, then it is necessary at least to give to

all in equal shares, so that there may be something to answer for. If we give to all in equal shares and enough so as to furnish all the destitute with sustenance, of course it would require not far from a milliard of rubles, a sum which evidently it is impossible to find. If it was distributed to all, a little at a time, then for the rich it would be an unnecessary addition, and for the poor not enough to save them from ruin. If we give only to the destitute, then the question is how to distinguish those that are really destitute from those that are not destitute at all.

The main thing is that the more is given the less the people will work for themselves, and the less they work the more their poverty will increase.

And it is impossible to help! What is to be done, then?

IV

If a man in society really wants to help the people, the first thing that he must do is clearly to comprehend his relation to them. When we have once come to understand our true relationship to them, we cannot begin to serve them in any other way than by ceasing to do what harms them.

My idea is that only love will save the people from all their misfortunes, including famine. Love cannot be defined in a word, but is always expressed in deeds. The deeds of love in relation to the starving consists in sharing one's morsel with them.

And therefore I think that the best thing that can be done now for the help of the destitute consists in settling in the midst of the starving, and living with them.

I do not say that every one who wishes to help the starving must immediately go and settle in an unwarmed izba, feed on bread made with lebeda-weed, and die within two months or two weeks, or that every one who does not do this does not do anything helpful. I say that the nearer a man comes to doing this the better it will be for

him and for others, but that any one does well who approaches this ideal.

There are two extremes: one is to give one's life for one's friends; the other is to live on without changing the conditions of one's life.

All men, who comprehend that the means of helping those that are now starving consists in overthrowing the barriers separating us from the people, and consequently who change their lives, unavoidably, according to the measure of their moral and physical powers, are distributed between these two extremes. Some, going into the country, so arrange their lives that they will live and eat and sleep together with the destitute; others will live and eat separately, but will establish eating-rooms and work in them; still others will help by distributing food and grain; others again will give money; a fifth class — I can imagine these — will live in a starving village, spending their income there, only occasionally helping the poverty which will once in a while be brought to their notice.

"Whether the people, the whole people, shall be supported or not supported, I do not know and I cannot know," — a man looking at it from this standpoint will say to himself. "To-morrow a pestilence or an invasion may befall us, and the people will die, but not from starvation; or to-morrow some new form of sustenance may be discovered which will feed every one; or — what is more likely — I may die to-morrow myself, and I shall know nothing of whether the people are to be fed or not fed. The main thing is that no one appoints me superintendent of the task of feeding forty millions of the people living in such extremes, and I evidently cannot attain the external aim of feeding all these people and safeguarding them from misfortunes; but am appointed over my own soul in order to lead my life as near as possible to what my conscience inculcates, and I can do only one thing — as long as I live, I can employ my powers for the service of my brethren, considering as my brethren all without exception."

And, wonderful to relate, a man has only to turn

from the task of solving these external problems, and put to himself the only true internal question peculiar to man — how best to live during this year of painful experience — and all these questions receive their very wisest solution.

External activity, setting for its object the feeding and maintaining the prosperity of forty millions of men, as we have seen, meets in its way certain obstacles with difficulty overcome: —

(1) To determine the degree of the actual need for the population, able to manifest in this supporting of themselves the greatest energy and absolute apathy, is out of the bounds of possibility.

(2) If it is granted that this determination is possible, then the amount of the money required and of the grain is so great that there is no likelihood of obtaining them.

(3) If it is granted that these sums will be supplied, then the gratuitous distribution of money and grain among the population will slacken the energy and self-reliance of the people, and these, more than anything else, have the possibility of upholding their prosperity in these trying times.

(4) If it is granted that the distribution will be promoted in such a way as not to enfeeble the self-reliance of the people, then there is no possibility of regularly determining the assistance, and those that do not need will grasp the share of those that do need, so that the majority of them will still remain without help and will perish.

The activity, however, which has the internal aim for the soul, and always united with sacrifice, avoids these obstacles, and attains enormous results not allowed by the other form of activity.

This is the activity which this year of famine — as I have seen more than once in these famine-stricken places — causes a peasant woman, the mistress of a house, at the words *Khrista radi*, — "for Christ's sake," — heard under her window, to shrug her shoulders, to knit her brows, and then after all to get down from the

shelf her last loaf, already begun, and cut from it a slice, and, crossing herself, give it.

For this activity the first obstacle does not exist — the impossibility of separating the destitution from the destitute. "Mavra's orphans" beg in Christ's name. She knows that they have nowhere to get anything, and she gives.

Neither does the second obstacle exist — the enormous multitude of the needy. The needy always have been and still are. The question is merely how much of my own resources I can give to them. The mistress of a house giving alms does not need to reckon how many millions are starving in Russia, or what is the price of wheat in America, how much at our ports and at our grain elevator, and how much may be taken under warrant. For her there is one question: how to put the knife through the loaf, cutting off a thick slice or a thin one; but whether thin or thick, she gives it, and firmly, assuredly, knows that if each one takes from his own, there will be enough for all, however much is needed.

The third obstacle still less exists for the mistress of the house. She is not afraid that the giving of this morsel will enfeeble the energy of "Mavra's children," and encourage them to idleness and constant beggary, because she knows that even these tramps understand how valuable to her is the slice which she cuts off for them.

Neither is there a fourth obstacle. The mistress of the house has no occasion to vex her mind over the question whether it is right to give to those that are standing now under her window, whether there are not others more needy to whom she ought to give that slice. She pities "Mavra's children" and she gives to them, and knows that if all will do the same thing, then no one will ever die of hunger either in Russia or anywhere else in the world.

Only such activity always has saved, saves, and will save men. This is the kind of activity that must be adopted by men who wish to serve others in this present time of adversity.

This activity saves men because it is the smallest seed of all, and grows into the tallest of trees. So insignificant is what one, two, or a dozen men can do, living in the country among the starving, and helping them according to the measure of their ability. But this is what I saw in my journey.

Some boys were leaving Moscow, where they had been working. And one was taken sick and fell behind his companions. He had been waiting for five hours, and was lying on the edge of the road, and a dozen muzhiks passed him. Among those that were passing was one peasant with a potato, and he asked the sick youth some questions, and finding that he was sick, took compassion on him and carried him to his village.

"Who is that?" "Whom has Akim brought?"

Akim told that the lad was sick, that he had been fasting, and had eaten nothing for two days — he could not help pitying him.

Then one woman brought some potatoes, another a patty, a third some milk.

"Akh! dear heart, he has been starving. Why, of course we pity him. He's only a boy!"

And this very lad by whom, notwithstanding his wretched appearance, a dozen men had passed without taking pity on him, became an object of pity to all, dear to all, because one had taken pity on him.

Loving activity gains its importance from the fact that it is contagious. External activity expressed in gratuitous gifts of grain and money, according to descriptions and lists, calls forth the worst emotions: greediness, hatred, deception, unkind criticism; private activity calls forth, on the contrary, the best sentiments: love and the desire of sacrifice.

"I have worked, I have struggled, they give me nothing; but they give a reward to that lazy dog, that drunkard! Who told him to get drunk? The thief deserves all he gets!" says the rich and the average muzhik to whom they refuse assistance.

With no less anger speaks the poor man of the rich who demands an equal share: —

"We are the poor ones. They suck us dry, and then give them our share. They are so mean," and the like.

Such feelings are elicited by the distribution of gratuitous assistance. But, on the contrary, if one sees how another is sharing with a neighbor, is working for an unfortunate, one has the desire to do likewise. In this lies the strength of loving activity. Its strength is that it is contagious, and, as soon as it becomes contagious, then there is no limit to its spread.

As one candle kindles another, and thousands are lighted from that one, so also one heart inflames another and thousands are set a-glowing. Millions of rubles will do less than will be done by even a small diminution of greediness and increase of love in the mass of the people. If only the love is multiplied — then the miracle is accomplished which was performed at the distribution of the five loaves. All are satisfied, and still much remains.

I will say more definitely how this activity presents itself to me. A person from the rich classes, wishing this trying year to share in the general poverty of these people, comes to one of the suffering localities and begins to live there. Spending there on the spot, in the Lukoyanovsky or Yefremovsky district, in a starving village, the tens of thousands, thousands, or hundreds, of rubles which he usually spends every year, he consecrates his leisure, employed by him in the city on amusements, in some activity for the advantage of the starving people, according to his abilities. The very one fact that he is living there and expending there what he usually spends in the city, brings a material help to the people. And the fact that he is to live in the midst of this people, even without self-sacrifice but with disinterestedness, already brings a moral advantage to him and to the people.

Evidently a person coming to a starving locality for the purpose of being of advantage to the people cannot be limited by the fact of living only for his own pleasure amid a starving population. I imagine to myself such a person — man or woman or a family with mode-

rate means, let us say with a thousand rubles a year — coming in this way to a locality where the crops had failed. This person or family hires or buys from some proprietor of his acquaintance a habitation, or selects and hires an izba, settles down in it according to his circumstances and demands, with the intention of bearing the inconveniences of life, lays in fuel, provisions, provides himself with horses, fodder, and the like. All this means bread for the people, but this cannot limit the relation of this family or this person to the people.

To the kitchen come beggars with wallets; and one must give to them. The cook regrets that the bread is mostly gone. She must either refuse them their crusts, or bake new loaves. An extra supply of bread is baked; more people begin to come. From families where the bread is gone and there is nothing to eat, they come asking for help; here again they must give. Their own cook proves not to be able to do the work. And the oven is small. They have to hire an izba for baking, and hire a special cook. This costs money. They have no money. But the family settling there have friends or acquaintances who know that they have settled in a destitute locality. The friends who know them send them money, and the work is broadened and grows. Bread is distributed from the hired izba. But some people come for bread and sell it. Cheating begins. And in order that there may be no temptation to take advantage of the bread distributed, instead of distributing it they give it to be eaten on the premises by those that come for it. They cook soups and oatmeal; an eating-room is established.

It seems to me that such eating-rooms as these places, where those that come may get fed, is the form of help which develops itself from the relations of the rich to the starving and brings the greatest advantage. This form more than all calls forth the direct activity of the helper, more than all unites him to the population, less than anything else brings about abuses, and gives the opportunity with the smallest means of feeding the greatest number of people.

In the Dankovsky and Yepifansky districts such eating-rooms were opened in September. The people called them the "Orphans' Aids," and apparently this very name prevented any abuse of these institutions. A healthy muzhik, with some opportunity of supporting himself, will not come to these eating-rooms, to eat up the orphans' food, and as far as I could observe regarded it as a shameful thing to do. Here is a letter which I received from a friend of mine, an agent of the zemstvo and one who lives constantly in the country, in regard to the efficacy of these "orphans' aids."

"Six '*orphans' aids*' have been opened not more than ten days, and already about two hundred persons have fed at them. The manager of the eating-rooms, with the advice of the village starosta, has to use his discretion in admitting persons to the latter — so many needy ones present themselves. It seems that the peasants do not let their whole families come, but that the destitute families send their candidates — almost exclusively old women and children. Thus, for example, the father of six children in the village of Pashkovo sent two of them to be admitted, and two days later brought still a third. The starosta said that it was particularly desirable to keep a sharp eye on them, as the stronger boys especially liked beet soup. The same starosta told me that sometimes the mothers would bring their children, they would fib, saying it was to encourage them, but if he looked around they would eat something. When you hear these words of the starosta, then you understand that it is not a lie, and that it is impossible to think so. Can it be that the famine has not touched them yet? We of course know that the wolf is at the door; but it is a pity that this wolf is simultaneously threatening so many families — may he not get hold of our resources! The calculation shows that each consumer gets away with one pound of bread and one pound of potatoes a day; but in addition to this must be reckoned fuel and all sorts of trifles — salt, onions, beets, and the like. Fuel gives more trouble than anything else, it represents in itself more expense for materials. The peasants have arranged

to take turns in sending their teams after provisions. The organization demands an active man and a careful economical storing of provision; the 'orphans' aids' *do not need* any supervision of the distribution of provisions: the mistress of the establishment is so used to living on crumbs, and all the partakers so carefully follow what goes on at the tables, that the slightest negligence would be instantly noised abroad and therefore it would correct itself. I have had dug two new cellars and in them stored three hundred chetverts of potatoes, but this supply is very small, since the demand is increasing every day. It would seem that the help had fallen in a very necessary moment. A man is appointed in charge of six eating-rooms, but time enlarges the circle of the activity of the free tables, and the limit has not been reached.

"I think how comfortable will be the work in the dining-rooms; here you experience a delight in pouring water over the thirsty plant; what ought to be the rapture in every day feeding hungry children!"

I feel that this form of activity is convenient and feasible, but I repeat that this form does not include all other forms. Persons living in the country will have a chance to help with money, and grain, and flour, and bread, and horses, and food pure and simple.

All it needs is to be men! And such men really there are. I have been in four districts, and in each there were people ready for this activity, and in some already beginning it.

UNPRINTED CONCLUSION[1]

OUR two years' experience in distributing among the needy population the contributions that came into our hands, more than anything else confirmed our long-established conviction that the chief part of the need, the privation, and the consequent suffering and sorrow, which we almost vainly tried by external methods to combat in one little corner of Russia, proceeded not from any exclusive, temporal causes independent of us, but from the most universal, constant causes, wholly dependent on ourselves, — causes found only in the anti-Christian, unfraternal relationship which we men of culture hold toward the poor, the working-men, those who everywhere endure this poverty and deprivation, and the suffering and affliction which merely have been accentuated more than usual during the last two years.

If this year we may not hear about the poverty, cold, and famine, the death of grown men and women, worn out by excessive labor, and of insufficiently nurtured old people and children by the hundreds of thousands, this results, not from the fact that this state of things does not exist, but from the fact that we shall not see it, we shall forget about it, we shall persuade ourselves that it is not so, or if it is, that it is a necessary condition of things and cannot be otherwise.

But this is untrue; it is not only not necessary, but it ought not to be, and it will cease to be, and it will soon cease to be.

However well concealed may seem to us the cup of wine from before the working-people, however clever, long-established, and universally accepted the arguments

[1] From Geneva edition.

whereby we justify our luxurious life amid the working-people, tormented with labor, and half fed, and servants to this luxury of ours, the world will more and more penetrate our relationship to the people, and we shall speedily appear in that disgraceful and dangerous position in which the criminal finds himself when the morning light, unexpectedly to him, overtakes him on the scene of his crime.

If it were possible beforehand for the merchant who sold the working-people the unnecessary and often harmful and unprofitable wares, striving to take as much as possible, or at least the good bread so needful to the laborer, buying it at low prices and selling it at high prices, to say that he served the needs of the people in honorable trade; or the manufacturer of calicoes, of mirrors, of cigarettes, or the seller of spirits or beer, to say that he was feeding the people by giving them wages; or for the functionary who receives a salary of thousands, collected from the last kopeks of the people, to persuade himself that he is working for the advantage of the people; or — what in these last years has been especially manifest in places attacked by the famine — if it had been possible for the owner of the land, for a rent less than the price of bread, letting his land to the starving peasants, or giving this land to the same peasants for a price put to uppermost notch, to say that he, in conducting a perfected agriculture, is working for the advantage of the rural population; then, now, when the people are dying of hunger from lack of land, though the proprietors have such enormous holdings around them planted with potatoes, sold for spirits or for starch, — then this could not be said.

Amid this people, degenerating from lack of food and from excessive labor on all sides of us, it is impossible not to see that all our absorption of the fruits of the people's labor on the one hand deprives them of what is essential for their sustenance, on the other adds in the highest degree to the strain of their labor. To say nothing of the insensate luxury of parks, flower-gardens, hunting expeditions, every glass of vodka swallowed,

every lump of sugar, every piece of butter or of meat, represents so much food taken from the mouths of the people, and so much labor added to their share.

We Russians in this respect are in the most favorable conditions clearly to see our situation.

I remember how once, long before the famine years, there happened to be visiting me in the country a morally sensitive young savant from Prague; and as we came out one winter's day from the hovel of a comparatively well-to-do muzhik, in which we had been calling, and in which, as everywhere, there was a woman, half worked to death and prematurely old, dressed in rags, a child sick with a rupture crying for her, and, as everywhere else in the spring, a calf fastened, and a lambing sheep, and filth and dampness — I remember how, as we came out, my young acquaintance tried to say something, and suddenly his voice broke and he burst into tears. He for the first time, after some months spent in Moscow and Petersburg, — where, as he walked along the asphalted sidewalks past luxurious shops, from one rich house to another, from one magnificent museum and library, palaces and buildings each more magnificent than the other, — for the first time he saw those people whose labor is the basis of all this luxury, and it horrified him and amazed him.

He, in his rich and learned Bohemia, as well as every European, especially every Swede, Swiss, or Belgian, may imagine, though he may be wrong, that there, where there is relative freedom, where education is widely diffused, where every one has the opportunity of entering the ranks of the cultured, luxury is only a legitimate reward of labor, and does not destroy the lives of others. Somehow one may forget about those generations of men working in the mines for the sake of producing a large part of the objects of one's luxury; may forget, not seeing them, those other races of men who in distant colonies are perishing, working for our caprices; but for us Russians there is no excuse for having these notions; the bond between our luxury and the sufferings and privations of

the people who are of one race with us is too manifest, we cannot help seeing the price, paid outright in human life, whereby our comforts and luxury are purchased.

For us the sun has risen, and it is impossible to hide what is in full sight. It is impossible to strive for power, for the necessity of ruling over the people, for science, for art, supposed to be indispensable for the people, for the sacred rights of personal property, for the necessity of upholding tradition, and the like. The sun has risen, and all these transparent excuses hide nothing at all. All see and know, that a man who serves the government, does this, not for the good of the people who never asked him to, but simply because he needs the salary; and that men who are occupying themselves with the arts and sciences, are occupying themselves with them, not for the enlightenment of the people, but for the sake of the honorariums and the pensions; and men who keep the land away from the people and put a high price on it do this, not for the support of any sacred rights, but for the enhancement of the income needed by them for the gratification of their caprices. It is no longer possible to avoid this and lie.

Before the dominant, rich, idle classes are only two possible ways of escape: One is to turn aside, not only from Christianity in its true meaning, but also from anything that resembles it, to turn away from humanity, from justice, and say: I have control of these advantages and privileges, and I will cling to them whatever befalls. Whoever wishes to take them from me will have an account to settle with me. I have the power in my hands, — soldiers, gibbets, dungeons, knouts, and methods of capital punishment.

The other method is in recognizing one's injustice, in ceasing to lie, in repenting, and neither by words, nor by money extorted from the people under suffering and pain, coming to their help as has been done in the last few years, but in breaking down the artificial bar which stands between us and the laboring people; not by words, but in fact, recognizing them as our brethren;

and with this end in view changing our lives, renouncing those advantages and privileges which we have; and having renounced them, to stand on equal conditions with the people, and together with them to attain those blessings of government, science, civilization, which we now, from without and not asking their permission, pretend to wish to confer upon them.

We stand at the parting of the ways, and a choice is inevitable.

The first alternative means that we must devote ourselves to a perpetual lie, to a perpetual fear of what that lie may hide, and nevertheless the consciousness that surely sooner or later we shall be deprived of that position to which we so obstinately cling.

The second alternative means a voluntary recognition and carrying out into practice of what we ourselves preach, of what is demanded by our hearts and our minds, and what sooner or later, if not by us, then by others, will be fulfilled, because only by those who have power renouncing it is the only possible escape from those torments wherewith our pseudo-Christian humanity is suffering. The escape is only in the renunciation of a false, and the recognition of a genuine, Christianity.

IN THE MIDST OF THE STARVING

I

OUR activity since the time of the last report has been as follows: —

First, and foremost, our work has consisted in the establishment and carrying on of free eating-rooms.

The eating-rooms, which at the time of our last report numbered seventy-two, continued to multiply, and now, in four districts,[1] amount to one hundred and eighty-seven. This increase has proceeded, and still proceeds, in the following manner: from villages, contiguous to those in which we have established eating-rooms, either individual peasants or men selected with the starosta, come to us and petition us to open free dining-rooms for them.

One of us goes to that particular village from which the petitioners have come, and after making a tour of the homes, draws up a list of the property of the poor inhabitants. Sometimes, though very rarely, it seems that the village from which the deputies have come is not so very poor, and that there is no actual need of giving aid; but in the majority of cases the one of us who visits the village, finds as it always happens in a careful examination of peasant poverty that the situation of the poor families is so bad that help is indispensable, and this help has been given by means of establishing free eating-rooms, in which are admitted the weakest members of the poor families. In this way the number of free eating-rooms has increased and still continues to in-

[1] Yepifansky, Yefremovsky, Dankovsky, and Skopinsky Uyezdui.

crease in the direction where need is greatest and less provided against, but notably toward the Yefremovsky District and especially toward the Skopinsky District, where assistance is particularly lacking.

The eating-rooms were one hundred and eighty-seven in all, one hundred and thirty of which give the pensioners *privarok*, or stew and bread, and fifty-seven where they get only stew. This division into dining-rooms that give bread and dining-rooms that do not has been instituted since March, in consequence of the fact that since that month, in the Dankovsky District, in the poorest villages where our eating-rooms have been established, the zemstvos began to advance grain in the form of a loan at the rate of thirty pounds to each person, and in the Yepifansky District even more than thirty pounds, so that in these districts the poor population was almost or wholly supplied with grain and lacked only the privarok — potatoes, cabbage, and other vegetables which, even if some of the poor people had been having it, by March had entirely disappeared. For these poor people our "breadless eating-rooms" were opened, to which the pensioners come, bringing their own bread. Accustomed to receive bread also at the eating-rooms, the peasants were at first dissatisfied at this change, and declared that the advantage obtained from these dining-rooms did not compensate for their labor in carrying fuel from the forest to the dining-rooms, and that they did not want to use these dining-rooms. But this dissatisfaction did not last very long. Only the rich ones refused, and then very soon they also began to ask to be admitted to the tables.

The expense of the distribution of provisions for these "breadless" dining-rooms for ten persons a week was as follows: —

Rye meal, for kvas	5 lbs.
Wheat flour, for preparing porridge	2 "
Pea meal, oatmeal, or Indian meal, for kisel	10 "
Pease	10 "
Millet, for kasha gruel or kulesh	10 "
Potatoes	2 measures.
Beets	1 measure.

Sauerkraut	½ vedro.
Hempseed oil	½ lb.
Salt	4 lbs.
Onions	1 lb.

Moreover during the winter each eating-room consumed a pound[1] and a half of kerosene a week, and sixty puds of firewood a month.

With this distribution comes to every man two pounds of vegetables, that is potatoes, cabbage, and beets, and a half pound of flour food, that is to say, millet, pea, or rye meal, which gives when boiled more than four pounds a day for each person.

The eating-rooms are especially interesting, from the fact that they are an ocular proof of the mistaken notion obtaining among the majority of the peasants themselves that rye bread is the most nourishing, the wholesomest, and at the same time the cheapest food. These eating-rooms have shown beyond a peradventure that pease, millet, maize, potatoes, beets, cabbage, oat and barley kisel, constitute a more nourishing and a wholesomer and a cheaper food than bread. Persons who come to the "breadless" eating-rooms bring very small pieces of bread, and sometimes come without any bread at all, and they passed the winter satisfied and healthy, eating every day two kopeks' worth of broth and two or three kopeks' worth of bread, when, if they had fed on bread only, it would have cost them at least seven and a half kopeks' worth.

Here is the bill of fare for a week, compiled by one of our assistants: —

Monday — Shchi (cabbage soup), kasha-gruel.
Tuesday — Potato soup (*pakhliobka*), kisel of pease; for supper the same.
Wednesday — Pea soup, boiled potatoes; for supper, pease.
Thursday — Shchi, kisel of pease; for supper, the same with kvas.
Friday — Potato soup, kulesh of millet; for supper, the same.
Saturday — Shchi, boiled potatoes; for supper, potato with kvas.
Sunday — Pea soup, kasha; for supper, gorokh with kvas.

[1] A pound is one sixty-fourth of a chetverik, which is 5.77 gallons of tepid water; a vedro is 2.70 gallons.

The compiler of this bill of fare was guided by those products which were to be had at his disposal at any given time. With beets, out of which all winter long the svekolnik, so much liked by every one, can be prepared, and with oatmeal, the bill of fare may be more varied, without making the food any more expensive.

Our eating-rooms are now distributed in localities thus:[1] In all the eating-rooms of the four districts at the present time nine thousand ninety-three men are being fed. Such was one of our undertakings, and the principal one.

Another of our undertakings in the last winter months consisted in furnishing wood to the needy population. This need, with each winter month, became more and more noticeable, and by the middle of the winter especially, when provisions had already been more or less distributed, had become our chief lack. In the localities hereabouts, where there is no firewood or peat, and it was out of the question to think of straw for ovens, this scarcity after the middle of winter became very great. Very frequently it was possible to find, not only children, but even grown persons, not on the oven, but in the oven, that had been heated the evening before and still retained a little heat; and in many homes they had burnt up the woodwork, the barns, the sheds, even the hay, employing straw and wattles and rafters for fuel.

Owing to the generous contributions of wood which we received from various persons, we were enabled to distribute more than three hundred sazhens[2] of wood among the population, besides what is required for our eating-rooms. The method of distribution was this: —

To the more opulent peasants we sold the wood at our own price — reckoning the average price for wood bought in the forest or at Smolensk at five kopeks a pud; to the average peasant we let it go on shares at the station called "Klekotki," thirty versts away, so

[1] The list of eating-rooms according to districts, villages, as well as the contributors and the amounts contributed, were included in Count Tolstoï's original "Report for April 24, 1892," but are omitted in the reprint, and noted accordingly. — Ed.

[2] Seven hundred and four cords.

that one half they took for themselves, and the other half they delivered to us. To the poor peasants who had horses we gave wood gratuitously, but on condition that they should themselves get it to their homes from the station. For the poorest of all the peasants who had no horses we delivered the wood at their homes — the same wood which was brought by those who got it for us on shares.

Our third undertaking was the sustenance of the peasants' horses. Besides the eighty horses which in the early winter were sent to the government of Kaluga, twenty were taken to board by Prince D. D. O., ten by a merchant, Mr. S., and forty were put into Mr. E.'s yard, where they were fed on two carloads of hay contributed by P. A. Y. and on old straw given by the owner, and on some additional feed purchased.

Before spring, from the month of February on, two places were arranged for taking care of and feeding the peasants' horses: one at Mr. S.'s dvor, the other at Mr. M.'s in the Yefremovsky districts. For the feed of the horses ten thousand puds of straw, two carloads of chaff, were bought, three hundred puds of millet meal were laid in for scattering over it. By these means two hundred and seventy-six horses were kept during the course of the past two months.

Our fourth undertaking consisted in the gratuitous distribution of flax and linden-bark for working up, for those that need foot-gear and cloth. One carload of flax at six hundred and sixty rubles was distributed among the needy without payment being required, and another eighty puds and one hundred puds, contributed, was distributed on shares. The linen cloth which should come to our share has not hitherto been received; so that we have not as yet been able to supply the demand of Mrs. N. N. who sent us one hundred and twenty rubles for cloth, of that of Mrs. K. M. who also proposed to buy the peasants' cloth for furnishing remunerative work to peasant women.

Linden bark was contributed to us: one car-load by P. A. Y., one hundred puds by L., and one thousand

puds were bought for two hundred and nineteen rubles. A part of this linden bark was sold at a low price, a part was given gratuitously to the most needy, another part was distributed on shares for the pleating of lapti.

The lapti brought to us have been partly distributed, and are being distributed. This undertaking, the furnishing of material for remuneration later, was less successful than anything else. The business is so petty, so inconvenient to us, who stand toward the peasants in the relation of distributers of contributions standing in the position of employers demanded such a strict account of the use of the employment of the material, that this part of our work was a bad failure, eliciting only unwarranted expectations, envy, and unkind feelings. Much the better way would have been to do as we are now doing — selling these articles at very low prices to those that can buy them, and giving them gratuitously to those that cannot afford them — to the poor.

Our fifth undertaking, begun in February, consisted in establishing eating-rooms for very small children, those of a few months, nursing babies, and up to three years of age. We thus arranged these eating-rooms: —

Having inscribed all the homes where there are children of this age, and where there is no milk, we selected a matron who had a milch cow, and proposed to her in return for a compensation of fifteen puds of firewood, four puds of bran a month — equivalent to a wage of three rubles — to take her milk and make kasha gruel enough for ten children, out of millet for children from a year and a half to three years old, and of buckwheat for babies. For a child a year and a half to three years old, two pounds of millet is required a week, and for babies a pound of buckwheat.

In the large villages, these eating-rooms were thus arranged: milk is bought at the rate of forty kopeks a vedro; a pound of millet a week is allowed to each baby up to a year; two pounds to children from a year to two years old; a glass of milk a day is given to each very young child, two glasses to those older; those that have no cows receive milk and millet in the form

of kasha; those that have a cow receive the kasha, giving milk in exchange.

The mothers come sometimes alone after their gruel and carry it home; sometimes they bring their children and feed them there. Generally at the arrangement of these "asylums," the mothers, yes, and all the peasants, propose, instead of a free eating-room at one house, a personal distribution of millet and buckwheat, declaring that milk is always to be found at the houses of decent people. But we think that for the security of health for little children our arrangement is precisely the one that is requisite. Having received her five or ten pounds of millet and wheat, every peasant woman, however good a mother she might be, would look on this millet and wheat as on a store of provisions belonging to the whole household, and would use it as her whim or her appetite or the will of her husband might dictate; so that in many cases this millet and wheat would not get to the children at all. But if every day she receives a portion of milk kasha already prepared for her child, then she infallibly gives it to him and feeds him.

We have now established about eighty of these asylums, and new ones are being established every day. These asylums, which at first called forth considerable doubt, have now come into regular evidence, and almost every day women come with babies from villages in which there are none and beg us to establish them. These asylums cost about sixty kopeks a month for each child.

Thus it is entirely impossible in such a complicated and constantly varying enterprise as we are engaged in to tell once and for all how much money we shall need for carrying on till the new harvest all that we have undertaken to do; and, therefore, we do not begin a work which we cannot bring to a conclusion. Then, according to all probability, there will remain in our hands unexpended funds from the newly received contributions and from the money which we have lent and may be returned in the autumn. The very best disposition to make of these surplus funds, I think,

would be in the continuation of such asylums for little children for the coming year also. If, as I am persuaded, money is provided for this work and people, then why should they not became a perpetual institution? The establishment of such institutions everywhere might in a high degree diminish infant mortality. Such was our fifth enterprise.

Our sixth undertaking, which is now begun and which apparently will be carried through in one way or another, consists in distributing among needy peasants for sowing a sufficient quantity of oats, potatoes, hemp, and millet. This distribution of seed is especially needful in our locality because, over and above the sowing of the cornfield, there was an unexpected need of sowing over again a considerable portion — about one-third — of the rye, which failed in several places.

These seeds were distributed by us among the neediest of the peasants, among those whose land would remain infallibly unproductive if they did not receive the seed; yet we did not absolutely give them away, but only on the condition that they should return an equal quantity from the new crop, independently of the present price and that which should then be attached to such commodities. The money received for these commodities might be employed for the establishment of the infant asylums for the coming winter.

The purchase and distribution of horses constitutes our seventh form of activity. Besides the large percentage of those lacking horses, who always lack horses, reaching one-third in many villages, this year there are many peasants who have eaten up their horses, and who must now infallibly fall into absolute poverty, or practical servitude, unless they get horses. To such peasants we sell horses. Since spring we have bought sixteen such, and it is essential that we buy about one hundred more in the places where we have established our free tables. We sell these horses for about twenty-five rubles apiece on these conditions: the one receiving the horse enters into an obligation to cultivate two portions of land for the widows and orphans, or peasants who have no horses.

Our eighth undertaking was the sale of rye, meal, and baked bread at low prices. This enterprise — the sale of bread — continuing on a small scale through the winter, now with the approach of spring is enlarging. We have established and are establishing bakeshops for the sale of bread at a low price, at the rate of sixty kopeks a pud.

Besides these separate departments, for which we have used, and are still using, the contributions of money, small sums have been used by us in outright gifts to the needy for imperative necessities: funerals, the payment of debts, for the maintenance of minor schools, the purchase of books, building, and the like. Such expenses were very few, and may be seen from the financial report.

Such in general outlines were our undertakings during the course of six months. Our principal enterprise during this time was the feeding of the needy by means of free eating-rooms. In the course of the winter months this form of help, in spite of abuses, which were met with, in its principal purpose, that of insuring a perfectly poverty-stricken and enfeebled population — the children, the old people, the sick, and the convalescent — from starvation and poor food, was entirely successful.

But with the approach of spring considerations present themselves, demanding a change in the existing method of arranging and conducting the free eating-rooms.

With the approach of spring we are confronted in the first place with the new condition that many who now come to the eating-rooms will be at work or off after horses, and it will be impossible for them to be present at dinner or supper time; in the second place, that in summer, owing to the increased heat in the dining-rooms, fires will be likely to break out. If as a consequence of this our activity changes, we will report upon it if it is possible.

Together with this we present a brief report of the contributions received by us and the use we made of them. A detailed report we will furnish if we have time, and have printed afterward.

II

REPORT ON THE USES MADE OF THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF MONEY FOR THE STARVING[1]

Our work during the course of the summer has consisted in the following: —

I. In maintaining the former eating-rooms and establishing new ones;

II. In arranging for the asylums for babies and little children;

III. In distributing seed for the spring sowing;

IV. In the purchase of horses; and,

V. In the establishment of bakeshops and the sale of bread.

Our first enterprise, the free eating-rooms, continued from April 24th till the third of August in almost the same form as in the preceding months, with only this difference, that, fearing the risk of fires from hot ovens, we gave up the baking of bread in the dining-rooms. Wherever we could do so, we furnished baker's bread; and where it was impossible to prepare a sufficient quantity of bread, we distributed meal in rations. In many villages some of our coadjutors proposed to give out rations also of privarok.[2]

This change was at first welcomed with delight, but very speedily in the most of the villages the peasants themselves desired to return to the old way.

The need of free dining-rooms was felt in summer in the long days and the hard work more than in winter. Very often in many villages the women begged that in place of the dinner, to which they had a right, in the evening they might bring their husbands and their fathers who came late from their work.

The number of free eating-rooms at this time notably increased.

The whole number of eating-rooms was two hundred

[1] Between April 24 and August 3, 1892.

[2] *Privarok* is boiled beef and broth.

and forty-six, and there were simultaneously fed in them from ten to thirteen thousand persons more or less.

Our second enterprise — the arrangement of *priyutui*, or asylums, for by this incorrect term we called the kitchens for the preparation of milk porridge for babies — continued on the former basis and was widely developed. For some of the asylums, in villages where there were few cows — and in our circuit there were villages where sixty out of a hundred homes had no cows at all, — we purchased cows on the stipulation that those that received them should furnish milk for the children assigned to them. For some, where this was possible, we bought milk.

In one hundred and twenty-four of these asylums between two and three thousand were fed.

Our third enterprise, consisting in the distribution of seeds, — oats, potatoes, millet, hemp, — we arranged as follows: —

Arriving at a village from which petitioners had come, we would invite three or four well-to-do householders who needed no assistance, and assign to them the duty of making a list of such persons as needed seed; and according to the representations of these inspectors we indicated the quantity necessary for each petitioner. Sometimes we made it more, sometimes less; sometimes we erased some names and substituted others not included on the lists.

Our fourth occupation — the distribution of horses to those who were carrying on farming, but had either eaten up their horse or had met with some unfortunate accident — was made especially difficult by the fact that the help given to any one person was disproportionately large, and therefore elicited envy, reproaches, and dissatisfaction among those whom we had to refuse. We determined this assistance just as in the case of the seeds, by the reports of the referees of the village from which the petitioners came.

In these two activities we saw with especial clearness the sharp distinction between the charity which has for its purpose the feeding of the hungry and attained by

the free eating-rooms, and the charity having for its purpose the giving of assistance to the peasant husbandry in which we were involved in distributing oats, millet, hemp, potatoes, and horses.

Having taken as our object the relieving of the inhabitants of a certain locality from the danger of pining away, of becoming sickly, and perishing from lack of food, we would first establish free eating-rooms in this locality, and thus completely attain our end. Even if there were occasionally abuses — that is, if there were people able to subsist at their own homes, who yet got food at the eating-rooms — these abuses were of small importance where the cost of food amounted to no more than from two to five kopeks a day.

But, having taken as our object to help the peasant husbandry, we were immediately confronted, in the first place, with the insurmountable difficulty of determining whom to help, how to help, and in what way; in the second place, with the magnitude of the need to cover, which would require a hundred times more means than we had at our disposal; and in the third place, with the possibility of the greatest abuses, such as always accompany a gratuitous, or even a loan, distribution.

Neither of these undertakings, notwithstanding the great efforts which we made to carry them out, confirmed in our minds the consciousness that by so doing we had conferred any real benefit on the peasants of our locality.

Our fifth activity was the baking of bread and selling it at a low price. At first we sold it at eighty kopeks, then at sixty kopeks, a pud, and this has continued to be the price till now.

This enterprise went, and is still going, very well. The people very gladly prize the opportunity of always having cheap bread at hand. Often, especially in summer, people came for it ten versts or more, and if they were not in time for the first baking, which would be already disposed of, they would have their names entered, as at the box office of the theaters, for ten pounds of the next baking, and they would wait till noon for their share.

By the end of July we planned to discontinue the free tables, keeping on only with the bakeries and the children's asylums, which were still needed, and on which we still spent the money remaining at our disposal. But we did not succeed in discontinuing the free tables, because in consequence of the cessation of the activities of the "Red Cross," it was essential to arrange immediately to establish eating-rooms for all those who had been under the care of the "Red Cross," and who had been since the first of August without oversight. From the first of August we established seventy eating-rooms, for the most needy of the "Red Crossites," who were very speedily joined by the poorest of the territorial peasants. Their number has been constantly increasing.

The harvest this year in the region of our activity has been like this: in a circle with a diameter of about fifty versts, in the center of which we are established, the harvest of rye is worse than a failure. In many villages along the Dona, — Nikitskoye, Myasnovka, Pashkovo, — where I was early in September, there was no rye at all. What there was had been sowed and eaten up. Oats had not grown at all; rarely had any one enough for seed. There were fields of oats which had not been mowed. Potatoes and millet were good, but not everywhere. Moreover, not all sowed millet.

To the question as to the economical situation of the people this year, I could not answer accurately. I could not answer it because, in the first place, all of us who were busied last year in helping to feed the people had got into the condition of a doctor who, having been summoned to a man with a dislocated leg, should see that the man was thoroughly diseased. What answer would the doctor give, if he were asked as to the patient's condition? "What do you want to know about?" the doctor will ask, in return. "Do you inquire about his leg, or his general condition? The leg is of no consequence, it is merely dislocated, — it is an accident, — but his general condition is bad."

But, moreover, I could not answer the question as to the situation of the people, "whether it is serious, very

serious, or not serious?" because all of us who live near to the people are too much accustomed to their continually and gradually deteriorating condition.

If any inhabitant of a city should come, in bitter cold weather, to an izba which had been slightly warmed the evening before, and should see the occupants of the izba crawling down, not from the top of the stove, but from the oven itself, in which they will take turns in spending the day, that being their only means of getting warm, or burning the roofs of their homes and hay for fuel, living on nothing but bread made of equal parts of meal and the worst kind of bran, and grown men quarreling and fighting because the slice cut off the loaf did not reach the designated weight by an eighth of a pound, or men unable to leave the izba because they had nothing to wear or nothing to put on their feet, then he would be struck by what he saw. We have got so accustomed to such things that they do not impress us. And so the question, in what condition the people of our locality are, would be answered better by a person who should come here for the first time than by us. We have grown hardened, and no longer see anything.

Some idea of the situation of the people in our locality may be gathered from the following statistical data, extracted from the *Tula Gazette*.[1]

In the four districts, Bogoroditsky, Yepifansky, Yefremovsky, Novosil'sky, during the four fruitful years from 1886 to 1890, on the average, in the five months from February to June inclusive, there were 9.761 deaths and 12.069 births. During the famine year, 1892, in these same districts during the same five months, there were 14.309 deaths and 11.383 births. In ordinary years the birth rate exceeds the death rate, on the average, by 2.308; in this unfruitful year the death rate exceeds the birth rate by 2.926. So that, in consequence of the failure of the crops in these four districts, the diminution of the population, as opposed to ordinary years, was 5.234. In comparison with other districts in

[1] *Tul'skiya Gubernskiya Vyedomosti.*

fruitful years, the following results are obtained: In the four fertile districts, Tul'sky, Kashirsky, Odoyevsky, Byelevsky, in 1892, in the course of the same five months, there were 8.268 births and 6.468 deaths. In these districts, when the harvest failed, there were 11.383 births and 14.309 deaths, so that in those districts that fruitful year the birth rate, compared to the death rate, was approximately as four to three, while in those districts when there was loss of the crop, the death rate was to the birth rate as seven to five; in other words, when the districts had good harvests to every four births there were three deaths, when the crops failed there were, to every seven deaths, only five births.

In the percentage of these relations the condition of the localities under the failure of the crops is shown with especial distinctness by the death rate in the month of June. In the Yepifansky District sixty per cent more died in 1892; in the Bogoroditsky District one hundred and twelve per cent, and in the Yefremovsky district one hundred and sixteen per cent more than in ordinary years.

Such were the consequences of the failure of the crops last year, notwithstanding the increased assistance rendered by government, by the "Red Cross," and by private charity. What will happen this year in our region, where rye has turned out worse than last year, oats have entirely failed, fuel is lacking, and the last energies of the population were exhausted a year ago?

How is it? Must they starve again? Starve? Free tables! free tables! Starve! This is an old story, and so terribly wearisome. It is a bore to you in Moscow and Petersburg, but here,—when from morning till evening they stand under your windows or at your door and you cannot go along the street without hearing always the same sentence: "We have not tasted food for two days; we have eaten our last oats; what shall we do? the last end has come; must we die?" and so on,—here, however shameful it is to acknowledge it, it has already become so irksome that you begin to look on them as your enemies!

I get up very early; 'tis a clear, frosty morning with

a beautiful sunrise; the snow creaks under my feet; I go outdoors, hoping that no one is as yet out, so that I may have time to take a turn. But no; as soon as I have opened the door, already there are two there: one a tall, broad-shouldered muzhik in a short, ragged sheepskin jacket, in broken linden-bark shoes, with an emaciated face, with a bag over his shoulder, — they all have emaciated faces, so that these faces have become typical of the muzhik. And with him is a lad of fourteen without any shuba, in a ragged little jacket, also wearing linden shoes and also carrying a bag and a stick.

I try to go past them; the low bows begin and the usual colloquy. There is nothing for it. I have to return indoors. They follow me.

"What do you want?"

"Have pity on us!"

"What?"

"Have pity on us!"

"What do you need?"

"We come for help."

"What kind of help?"

"To save our lives."

"But what do you need?"

"We are starving to death. Help us a little!"

"Where are you from?"

"From Zatvornoye."

I know that is a miserable rundown community, where we have not, as yet, opened a free eating-room. Beggars come from there in dozens, and I immediately reckon this man as one of these professional beggars, and I feel indignant at him, and indignant because they bring their children with them and spoil them.

"What do you ask for?"

"Give us your advice!"

"But how can I give you my advice? We here can't do anything. We have nothing here to eat."

But he pays no attention to me; and once more begin the same old stories heard a hundred times, and seeming to me to be made up out of whole cloth: —

"Nothing grew; eight in the family; I am the only worker; the old woman has died; last summer we had to eat the cow, at Christmas the last horse died; wherever I go there is nothing, the children are crying for hunger; there is nowhere to turn to; we have not anything to eat for three days."

This is the usual story. I wait, wondering if he will soon end it. But he keeps speaking.

"I thought I could live somehow; but I have struggled till I have no strength left. I never expected to have to beg, but God has brought me to it!"

"Very good, very good; we will come; then we will see what can be done," I say, and I wish to go, and my eyes suddenly rest on the boy. The boy is looking at me piteously with his beautiful brown eyes full of tears and hope, and one bright tear-drop already hangs on his nose, and at the same instant falls off and drops on the wooden floor covered with trampled snow. And his pretty, agonized face, with ruddy hair blown by the breeze around his head, is all convulsed with restrained sobs. For me, the father's words are the old well-worn yarn. But to him that repetition of the horrible time which he and his father had experienced together, and the repetition of it all in the triumphant moment when they had at last reached me, reached help, affected his nerves so shaken by famine. To me all this was only a bore, a bore; all I can think of is how soon they would squander what I should give.

To me it is an old story, but to him it is frightfully new.

Yes, to us it is a bore. But still, they have such a longing to eat, such a longing to live, such a longing for happiness, for love, as I could see by his charming tear-brimming eyes fastened on me, that he had — this good, pitiful lad, tormented by poverty and full of an innocent pity for himself!

BYEGITCHEVKA, September 23, 1892.

FAMINE OR NOT FAMINE

THIS winter I received a letter from Mrs. Sokolof with an account of the needs of the peasants in the Voronezh Government, and I transmitted this letter, together with a memorandum of my own, to the *Russkiya Vyedomosti*,[1] and since then several persons have sent

[1] The memorandum addressed to the editor of the *Russian Gazette* was as follows: —

DEAR SIR, — I opine that the publication of the enclosed private letter from a person who evidently knows the peasantry very intimately, and accurately describes their situation on the spot, may be useful. The situation of the peasants in the places described is not exceptional; as I well know it is the same with the peasants in many places in the Kozlovsky, Yeletsky, Novosil'sky, Chernsky, Yefremovsky, Zemlyansky, Nizhnedyevitsky districts, and many others in the zone of the "black earth" — the chernozyom. The person who wrote the letter had no notion of its being published, and only consented to it at the solicitation of her friends.

It is true that the situation of the larger part of our peasantry is such that it is sometimes very difficult to draw the line between what may be called famine and their normal condition, and that the aid especially needed this year is of the same kind that was needed last year and every year, though in a less degree; it is true that charitable aid for the population is a very difficult question, since it often stimulates a desire to take advantage of it even in those that might exist without such aid; it is true that what can be done by private persons is only a drop in the ocean of the peasants' need; it is true, also, that aid in the form of dining-rooms, selling grain at reduced prices or distributing it, furnishing fodder for cattle, and the like, is only a palliative and does not overcome the fundamental causes of the catastrophe. All this is true, but it is also true that aid extended temporarily may save the life of an old man, or a child, may convert a ruined man's despair or animosity into a feeling of trust in the goodness and brotherly love of his fellow-men. And what is more important than all, it is unquestionably true that if every man of our circle who, instead of thinking of his amusements, theaters, concerts, subscription dinners, races, exhibitions, and the like, would think of that extreme poverty (as compared with anything to be seen in the city) in which now, at this particular minute, many and many of our brethren are living, and if every such man would strive, even though ignorantly, by sacrificing the smallest part of his pleasure, to help this dire need, he would unquestionably help himself in the most important thing in the world — in a reasonable under-

me their contributions to aid the starving peasants. These small contributions I have forwarded partly to a good acquaintance of mine in the Zemlyansky District, two hundred rubles; the monthly contribution of Smolensk physicians and certain other small offerings I despatched to the Chernsky District in the government of Tula, to my son and his wife, for the distribution of help in their locality. But in April I received new and quite important contributions: Mrs. Mevius sent four hundred rubles; three hundred came in small sums; S. T. Morozof gave one thousand rubles; so that about two thousand were collected, and considering that I had no right to refuse to serve as medium between the contributor and the needy, I decided to go to the locality so as to distribute this aid in the very best way. As in 1891 I came to the conclusion that *the very best form of helping* was by *eating-rooms*,[1] because only by the organization of eating-rooms could be assured good every-day food for old men, old women, the sick, and the children of the poor, and this, I consider, met the desires of the contributors.

In distributing provisions by hand this end was not attained, because every good manager on receiving meal, always first of all gave some to his horse with which he had to plow, and in doing so, he does what is perfectly reasonable, because he must plow so as to support his family, not only this year, but the next; the feeble members of his family will not have enough to eat this year any more than before the distribution, so that the object of the contributors will not be attained.

Moreover, only in the form of eating-rooms for the feeble members of families is there any limit on which

standing of the meaning of life, and by the fulfilling in it of his human destination.

Mrs. Sokolof's letter gives a vivid account of the pitiful destitution of the peasantry caused by the failure of their crops and their inability to earn anything to pay for rent, for saving their cattle, for seed, or even for food and clothing. — Ed.

[1] The word *stolovaya*, plural *stolovuiya*, from *stol*, a table, uniformly used in the original, is here translated eating-room, free eating-room, free tables. — Tr.

to take a stand. By distribution by hand, the aid goes to the farm,[1] and in order to satisfy the demands of a ruined peasant farm, it is impossible to decide what is most necessary and what is not. Most necessary is a horse, is a cow, is the redemption of a pawned shuba, and payment of taxes, and seed, and repairs. Thus in the distribution of help one has to give it arbitrarily at haphazard, or else to all equally without distinction. Therefore I decided to distribute the help, as I had done in 1891, 1892, in the form of rations.

In order to determine the neediest families and the number of persons in each of them deserving to be admitted to the public tables, I was guided as before by the following considerations:—

1. The amount of cattle;
2. The number of parcels of land;
3. The number of members of each family capable of working for wages;
4. The number of consumers; and
5. Exceptionally unfortunate circumstances reducing any family,—a fire, illness of members, the death of a horse, and the like.

The first village to which I came was Spasskoye, well known to me as having once belonged to Ivan Sergeyevitch Turgenief. Having inquired of the starosta and the other old men of the village as to the condition of the peasants in that vicinity, I became convinced that it was far from being as bad as had been the condition of the peasants among whom we had organized public tables in 1891. At all the farms there were horses, cows, sheep, potatoes, and there were no ruined houses. So that, judging by the condition of the Spasskoye peasants, I thought that probably the reports of the year's poverty were exaggerated.

But my visit to Malaya Gubarevka and other villages to which I was directed as being very poor, convinced me that Spasskoye was in exceptionally fortunate circumstances, both on account of having good

[1] *Khozyaïstvo*, housekeeping, farming, anything connected with domestic economy.

land and on account of having enjoyed a good harvest the year before. Thus in the first village which I went to from Spasskoye, Malaya Gubarevka, on ten farms there were four cows and two horses, two families were begging, and the poverty of all the inhabitants was terrible. Such also was the condition of many villages,[1] though some were rather better off than others. In all these fourteen or fifteen villages, though there was no adulteration of the bread as was the case in 1891, still the bread, while pure, was not to be had as desired. Broths — of millet, cabbage, potatoes — were entirely lacking to the majority. The food consisted of herb shchi made of grass, colored with milk where there was a cow, but not where there was no cow, and nothing but bread. In all these villages the majority of the inhabitants had sold or hypothecated everything that could be sold or hypothecated. So that there was so much of extreme poverty in the places around us in a radius of seven or eight versts that, after we had established fourteen public tables, we received each day petitions for help from new villages in the same situation. Where the eating-rooms were established they went very well and cost about one ruble fifty kopeks a month for each person and apparently met the requirements which we set for ourselves, — keeping up the life and health of the feeble members of the poorest families.

In the afternoon of June 6, I reached the village of Gushchino, which consists of forty-nine homes, twenty-four of which lacked horses. It was dinner-time: outdoors under two well-cleaned sheds at five tables sat eighty pensioners; the old men mixed with the old women on stools at large tables, at small tables the children on deal boards laid across blocks. They had just finished the first course, potatoes with kvas; and the second, cabbage soup, was coming on. The peasant women were pouring the smoking, well-prepared shchi into wooden bowls; a waiter with a loaf of bread

[1] Bolshaya Gubarevka, Matsnevo, Protosovo, Chapkino, Kukuyevka, Gushchino, Khmyelinok, Shelamkovo, Lopashino, Siderovo, Mikhaïlovo Brod, Bobriko, and the two Ramenkos.

and a knife went around the table, and holding the loaf against his chest, cut off slices of nice-looking, fresh, savory bread to any one who had eaten his.[1] The grown-up people were served by the matron[2] and a woman from among the pensioners, the children by a young girl, the matron's daughter. Everything went off in an orderly, dignified manner, exactly as if this condition of things had existed for centuries.

The pensioners were for the most part wrinkled old women and emaciated, feeble old men with thin beards, gray hair, or bald heads, and wearing tattered clothing. On all their faces there was an expression of tranquillity and satisfaction. All these people evidently found themselves in that peaceful and joyous and even somewhat enthusiastic frame of mind induced by the supply of sufficient food after long deprivation of it. You could hear the sounds of eating, of subdued conversation, and occasionally a laugh at the children's tables. Two tramps were present, and the manager apologized for admitting them to the dinner.

From Gushchino I proceeded to the hamlet of Gnyevuishevo, from which two days before some peasants had come asking for aid.

This hamlet, like Gubarevka, consists of ten homes, and for these ten homes there were four horses and four cows and almost no sheep. All the houses were so old and wretched that they barely stood. All the people were poor and begged us for help.

"Though the very little children have gone to sleep," said a peasant woman, "yet they begged for papki (bread), and as there was none to give them, they went to bed without any supper."

I know that here there is a bit of exaggeration, but what a muzhik in a kaftan with the shoulder torn said was surely no exaggeration, but the sober truth:

[1] We succeeded in securing on the South Eastern R. R., two carloads of flour at seventy-six kopeks when its price was ninety, and this flour proved to be so unusually good that both the women who made the loaves and those who were at the tables were enthusiastic over it, declaring that the bread made from it was like gingerbread. — AUTHOR'S NOTE.

[2] *Khozyaïka.*

"There might be enough bread for two or three children," said he, "but here I carried to the city my last outside garment — my shuba has been there for a long time — and brought back only three pudiks for eight persons. How long would that last? And now I don't know what next I can pawn!"

I asked for change for three rubles. In the whole hamlet there was not a ruble of money.

Evidently it was necessary to establish a free table there. And it was equally necessary to do the same in other hamlets from which came petitions.

Moreover, we were informed that in the southern part of the Chernsky District, on the borders of the Yefremovsky, the need was very great, and that so far no help had been afforded. It would seem evident that we must go and widen our operations, and this was rendered possible by the receipt of quite considerable donations: five hundred rubles from the Princess Kudashef, a thousand rubles from Mrs. Mansurof, two thousand rubles from theatrical managers.

But it proved that it was almost impossible to continue the work, much less to widen its scope. It was impossible to continue it for the following reasons: The governor of Orlof would not permit the free eating-rooms to be opened, first, without the consent of the local wardenship; secondly, without the decision of the question as to the establishment of every eating-room by the zemsky nachalnik; and thirdly, without sometime previously notifying the governor as to the number of eating-rooms which would have to be opened in any given place.

In the government of Tula the stanovoï had already appeared with an order prohibiting the establishment of eating-rooms without the governor's consent; without the coöperation of helpers specially occupied in the rather complicated and laborious business of the free tables their establishment is impossible.

Thus, notwithstanding the unquestionable need of the people, notwithstanding the means contributed by the philanthropic for the relief of this need, our work not

only could not be enlarged, but was in danger of being entirely stopped. As a result of this the money recently received by me, and especially the thirty-five hundred rubles above mentioned, and certain other small contributions remained unexpended, and will have to be returned to the donors, unless they wish to make some other disposition of them.

On the third day of June the account of receipts and disbursements was as follows: —

Receipts.

	Rubles.	Kopeks.
From the physicians of Smolensk	323	27
" Mr. Mevius	400	..
" Prince T.	100	..
" A. Z.	200	..
" Baumann	25	..
" M. K.	40	..
" C.	25	..
Through "R. V."	112	48
From "A woman" through D.	16	..
" Kasatkin	25	..
Through "R. V."	200	..
From Baumann	20	..
" "A woman"	250	..
" gymnasium pupils	18	..
By the sale of a medal from C. N. Shil	99	..
From Olimpiada Kolalevskaya	4	..
" S. T. M.	1000	..
" E. F. Younge	15	..
	3012	75

Disbursements.

	Rubles.	Kopeks.
Flour (2584 puds)	2061	18
Millet (150 puds)	140	..
Pease (75 puds)	60	..
Potatoes (131 chetverts)	171	24
Cabbage (56 puds, 35 lb.)	27	50
Transport of millet, butter, salt	3	10
Firewood	56	75
Butter (5 puds)	27	80
Salt (10 puds)	2	40
	2549	97

Such has been my personal work. Now I will try to answer those general questions to which my activity has led me — questions which, if one judges by the newspapers, have occupied society also of late. These questions are as follows: —

Is there famine this year or is there not famine?

Why is there so often such widespread need among the people?

And what is to be done to prevent this need from recurring, and would not especial measures be demanded for overcoming it?

To the first question the answer is this: —

There are statistical reports to prove that the Russian nation in general are not eating within thirty per cent of what a man needs for his normal support. Moreover, there is information to the effect that the young men of the black earth zone during the last twenty years have been growing less and less able to fulfil the requirements of a good physique for military service; the general census has shown that the increase of the population, twenty years ago the largest in the agricultural region, has been constantly diminishing, and of late has come to zero in these governments.

But even without studying statistical data, it requires only to compare the average peasant farmer of the central regions — skeleton-like in his emaciation and with his unhealthy complexion — with the same peasant who has secured a situation as a dvornik or a coachman where he has a good table, and to compare the motions of this dvornik or coachman, and the work which he can do, with the motions and work of the peasant, living at home, to see how much the peasant has become enfeebled.

When, as used to be the case with extravagant managers and is still the case, cattle are kept for manure, feeding them somewhere in the cold yard simply that they may not perish, it results that from all this cattle, only those which are in full strength endure without loss to their organism, while the old and the feeble, the young ones that have not yet attained strength, either

perish, or if they survive, it is at a loss of their increase and their strength, and in the case of the young at a loss of size and development and in exactly the same condition are the Russian peasantry of the black earth center.

So that if by the word "*golod*" — hunger — is meant that insufficiency of food in consequence of which men are subject to disease and death, as was the case recently in India according to reports, then such a famine did not exist in Russia in 1891 nor does it to-day.

But if by the word "golod" is meant insufficiency of food, — not the kind that people actually die of, but the kind where people live, but live miserably, dying prematurely, growing disfigured, not begetting children, and degenerating, — then, indeed such a famine has existed for the past twenty years for the largest part of the black earth center, and is this year particularly violent.

Such is my answer to the first question. To the second question, What is the cause of this? my answer is that it is mental and not material.

Military men know the meaning of the term "the spirit of the army," know that this intangible element is the first and foremost condition of success, that if this element is absent, all others are unavailing. Let soldiers be handsomely dressed, well fed and armed, let them have the most advantageous position, the battle will be lost if this intangible element called "the army spirit" is lacking.

It is the same thing in the battle with nature. As soon as a people lack vigor, faith, hope in an ever increasing amelioration of their circumstances, but on the contrary become conscious of the idleness of their endeavors, of dejection, that people will not conquer nature, but will be conquered by it. And such in our day has come to be the condition of our peasantry, and especially that of the agricultural center. They feel that their position as agriculturists is miserable, almost inextricable, and having become wonted to this inextricable situation, they no longer struggle with it, but merely exist and accomplish only as much as the instinct of self-preserva-

tion leads them to do. Moreover, the wretchedness of the condition into which they have fallen still further enhances the depression of their spirits.

The lower the economical prosperity of the population sinks, like a weight on a lever, the harder it is for them to rise, and the peasants, conscious of this, give up all effort.

The symptoms of this depression of spirit are very many. The one first and foremost is their complete indifference to all spiritual interests. The religious question is absolutely lacking in the agricultural center, and not in the least because the peasant holds firmly to orthodoxy, — on the contrary, all the reports and advices of the priests confirm the fact that the people are growing more and more indifferent to the Church, — but because he feels no interest in spiritual questions.

A second symptom is their inertia, their unwillingness to change their habits and their position. For all these years at a time when in the other governments of Russia European plows, iron harrows, new methods of sowing seeds, improved horticulture, and even mineral manures were coming into use, in the center everything remained the same — the wooden sokha, and all the habits and customs of Rurik's time. Even the emigration is less from the black earth district.

A third symptom is their aversion to rustic industry, not through laziness, but the languid, dejected, unproductive labor; labor, the emblem of which might be represented by the well from which the bucket is drawn, not by a sweep, nor by a wheel, as used to be done, but by the rope alone and by the hands, and with a leaky bucket, so that a third of the water is lost before it reaches the top. Such is almost all the labor of the black earth muzhik, who labors sixteen hours in plowing a field with a horse scarcely able to drag one leg after another, while with a good horse, well fed, and a good iron plow he might accomplish it in half a day. Together with this is the natural desire to forget his troubles, and then wine and tobacco are more and

more extensively used, so that lately even young boys drink and smoke.

A fourth symptom of dejection of spirits is the undutifulness of sons to their parents, of younger brothers to their elders, the retention of money earned away from home, and the endeavor of the younger generation to avoid the heavy, hopeless rustic life, and to get situations in the city. A striking symptom of this degeneracy during the last seven years was the fact that in many hamlets mature and, it would seem, well-to-do peasants would come begging to the free eating-rooms, and enter them if they were permitted.

This was not so in 1891. Here, for example, is an incident which shows the whole degree of the poverty and distrust of their own resources to which the peasants have come.

In the village of Shushmino, Chernsky District, a lady owning an estate sold the peasants some land through the bank. She asked of them a money payment at the rate of ten rubles a desyatin, and even then gave them two terms of payment at the rate of five rubles each, letting them have the land with the seed in at the rate of two chetverts of oats on the spring yield. And in spite of these remarkably advantageous conditions, the peasants hesitated and would not undertake it.

So that my answer to the second question is that the cause of the situation to which the peasants are reduced is that they have lost their energy and confidence in their own forces, and hope for the amelioration of their circumstances; they have lost spirit.

The answer to the third question, — how to help the peasants in their wretched condition? — is an outcome of this second answer. In order to help the peasantry one thing is necessary — to raise their spirits, to overcome what is crushing them.

The spirits of the peasantry are crushed by the lack of recognition on the part of those that govern them of their human dignity, considering the peasant, not a man like others, but a coarse, unreasonable creature which

ought to be guarded and directed in every action, and consequently utter constraint and extinction of his personality. Thus in religion, the most important of all things, every peasant feels that he is not a free member of his Church, having freely chosen, or, at least, having freely acknowledged the faith that has been preached to him, but a slave to that Church, obliged absolutely to fulfil the duties laid upon him by his religious superiors, who are sent to him and appointed independently of his will or choice. That this is an important cause for the dejected condition of the people is proved by the fact that always, everywhere, as soon as peasants are emancipated from ecclesiastical tyranny, falling away, as happens, into a sect, immediately the spirits of this population rise and immediately, without exception, their economical prosperity is established.[1] Ruinous for the people is this anxiety about them, displayed in the special laws for the peasantry, leading in reality to the absence of all laws, and to the full discretion of functionaries placed in control of the peasants.

For the peasants there exist nominally certain special laws both for the control of the land and their allotments and for their obligations — they have no rights; and in reality there is an inconceivable mass of decrees, explanations, of common law, of cassation decisions, and the like, in consequence of which the peasants, with perfect justification, feel that they are absolutely dependent on the whim of their numberless chiefs.

The peasant recognizes as his chief, not only the sotsky, the starosta, the starshina, the secretary, the uryadnik, the stanovoĭ, the ispravnik, the insurance agent, the surveyor, the arbitrator of disputes, the veterinary and his assistant, the doctor, the priest, the judge, the magistrate, and every functionary and even landowner, but also every gentleman, because he knows by experience that every such gentleman can do with him what he pleases.

More than by anything else is the peasant's spirit crushed — although this is not visible — by the shame-

[1] This passage is not found in the Moscow edition. — Ed.

ful torture of flogging, which, like the sword of Damocles, hangs over every peasant.

Thus to my three questions propounded at the beginning — is there famine or is there not famine? what is the cause of the people's poverty? and what must be done to help this poverty? — my answers are as follows: —

There is no famine, but in the whole population there is chronic lack of food, and this has lasted already twenty years, and is all the time increasing, and is especially felt this year owing to the poor harvest of a year ago, and will be still worse the year to come because the rye harvest this year is poorer than it was a year ago. There is no famine, but the situation is far worse. It is just the same as would be the case of a physician who was asked if a patient had typhus, and replied no, not typhus, but galloping consumption.

To the second question my answer is, that the cause of the poverty of the people is not material, but is spiritual, that the chief cause is the loss of their spirits, that until the people shall recover their spirits there will be no help by external means — coming from the ministry of agriculture,[1] or exhibitions, or agricultural colleges, or changes of tariff, or deliverance from redemption payments (which should have been done long ago, since the peasants long ago paid up their obligations if the rate per cent now employed is taken into consideration), or the withdrawal of duties from iron and machinery[2] — nothing will help the people if their mental state remains the same. I do not say that these measures are not all advantageous, but that they will be advantageous only when the people are cheered in spirit and consciously and freely desire to take advantage of them.

The answer to my third question — what to do that this poverty may not be repeated — is that it is necessary, I will not say to esteem the people, but to cease to scorn and insult them by treating them as if they

[1] "And all his fictions." Geneva edition.

[2] The Geneva edition adds: "And the establishments for the undoubted healing of all diseases, and parochial schools, not too much loved by them now."

were animals; it is necessary to subject them to general, not to exclusive laws; it is necessary to give them freedom of education,[1] freedom of religion,[2] freedom of movement, and above all to remove the brand of ignominy which lies on the past and present reigns, the practice[3] of barbarous torture — the castigation of grown men simply because they happen to be in the class of peasants.

If it is said to me: "Here you wish the people well — choose one of two things: to give the whole ruined population three horses, two cows, and three well manured desyatins, and a stone house for each family, or only freedom of worship, of instruction, of migration, and the abrogation of all special laws for the peasants," then I should without hesitation choose the second, because I am persuaded that with whatever material blessings the peasant is loaded, if they remain with the same clergy, the same parochial schools, the same crown liquor saloons, the same army of functionaries pretending to be working for their advantage, then within twenty years they would have spent everything, and would be left the same poor wretches which they were.[4]

If the peasants should be freed from all these dealings and humiliations by which they are bound, then within twenty years they would acquire all the riches with which we should wish to reward them, and far more besides.

I think this will be so in the first place, because I have always found more reason and actual knowledge, such as is needful to people, among the peasants than among the functionaries, and because I think that the peasants themselves devise better and more quickly what is needful for them; in the second place because it is more reasonable to suppose that the peasants — the very persons whose welfare is in question — know better in what it consists than the functionaries, who are engaged chiefly in getting their salaries; and in the third place, because the experience of life constantly and unmistakably

[1] Not in Geneva edition. [2] Not in Moscow edition.
[3] The twelve words preceding are not in the Moscow edition.
[4] This paragraph is not found in the Moscow edition. — Ed.

shows that the more the peasants are subjected to the influence of the chinovniks, as is the case in the centers, the poorer they grow, and on the other hand,[1] the farther peasants live from the functionaries, as for example, in the governments of Samara, Orenburg, Viatka, Vologda, Olenezh, and Siberia, the more prosperous they are, without exception.

Here are the thoughts and feelings which were aroused in me by a new and close observation of the peasants' poverty, and I consider it my duty to express them, so that true men, actually desirous of compensating the people for all that we have received and are receiving from them, might not spend our energies in vain in a second-rate and often false activity, and that all our energies might be expended on that without which no help is efficacious — the destruction of all that depresses the spirit of the people, and the restoration of all that may raise it.

June 7, 1898.

Before despatching this article I resolved to go once more to the Yefremovsky District, the wretched condition of a part of which I had learned from persons worthy of the fullest confidence. On my way to this locality it was my fortune to traverse the Chernsky District from one end to the other. The rye in that region where I lived, that is, in the northern part of the Chernsky and Mtsensky districts, this year was thoroughly bad, worse than in the past, but what I saw on the way to the Yefremovsky District was perfectly unexpected.[2]

The region which I traversed — about thirty-five versts in a straight line, from the village of Gremyachevo to the boundary of the Yefremovsky and Bogoroditsky districts, and, as I was told, twenty versts in width — was looking forward to awful poverty for the year before them. The rye over the whole space of this quadrilateral — almost one hundred thousand desyatins[3] — had

[1] The fifty words preceding are not in the Moscow edition.
[2] "Surpassed my gloomiest forebodings." Geneva edition.
[3] This sentence not so definite in Moscow edition.

been an absolute failure. If you go one verst, two, ten, twenty versts, on either side of the road on land belonging to various estates, you will find instead of rye an abundance of the lebeda-weed; on the peasants' land not even that! So that in the year to come the situation of the peasants in this locality will be incomparably worse than it is now, and I was told that the rye had failed in many other places.

I speak of the situation of the peasants only, and not of the farmers in general, because only for the peasants, who are supported directly and immediately by their grain, and especially by their rye-fields, does the crop of rye have a decisive answer to the question of life and death.

When in a peasant's home the supply of grain is not sufficient for his household or a large part of it, and bread is high, as it is this year (about a ruble), then his situation becomes desperate, like the situation, let us say, of a functionary deprived of his place and his salary, and still continuing to support his family in the city. For the chinovnik to exist without his salary, he must either spend his earnings or sell his possessions, and each day of life brings him nearer to absolute ruin. Exactly so it is with the peasant who is obliged to buy costly bread, apart from the usual quantity secured by his definite earnings, with this difference, that, as he sinks lower and lower, the chinovnik, as long as he lives, is not deprived of the possibility of securing a place and getting his position back again; while the peasant, deprived of his horse, his field, his seed, is definitely deprived of any possibility of recovering himself.

In this ruin-threatening situation are most of the peasants in this locality. Next year this situation will be not only threatening, but, for the majority, will bring actual ruin. And therefore assistance, both from the government and from private persons, will be even more essential than it is this year.

And meantime, now, at the present moment, in our government of Tula, as well as in the governments of Orlof, Riazan, and Voronezh, and others, the most en-

ergetic measures are taken to prevent application of private aid, in any of its forms, — measures, it would seem, universal and constant.

Thus, in this Yefremovsky District where I went, persons from outside were absolutely prohibited from coming in to render assistance to the needy. A bake-shop, opened there by a person who came with contributions from the Free-Economical Society, was closed under my own eyes, and the person himself was expelled. And others who had come before me were also expelled. It was taken for granted that there was no need in this district, and that help was not required. So that, even if from private reasons I could not have fulfilled my intentions and driven through the Yefremovsky District, my visit there would have been useless, or would have brought about unnecessary complications.

In the Chernsky District during my absence, according to the reports of my son, who went there, the following took place. The police authorities, coming to a hamlet where a free eating-room had been opened, prevented the peasants from going to it for their dinners and suppers; to prove their fidelity to duty, they broke up the tables where the food was served, and calmly rode away, not substituting for the crust of bread which they took away from these starving men anything except a recommendation to resigned obedience!

It is difficult to realize what comes into the minds and hearts of people compelled to submit to this arbitrary prohibition, or of those that know about it. It is still more difficult, for me at least, to realize what comes into the minds and hearts of others — of those that consider it necessary to enact and carry out such measures; that is to say, without knowing what they are doing, to take the bread of charity out of the mouths of starving old men and children.

I know the considerations which are urged in defense of such measures. In the first place, it is necessary to show that the condition of the population committed to our charge is not so bad as the men of the party opposed to us try to make it appear — as if the matter did

not concern the aid of the starving, but the outcome of a contest. In the second place, every establishment — and free eating-rooms and bakeshops, in the opinion of the stanovoï — must be subjected to the control of the police authorities.[1] In the third place, the direct and immediate relations of those that are assisting the population might arouse in them undesirable thoughts and feelings.

But all these considerations, even if they had any reason — and they are all false — are so petty and insignificant that they can have no weight in comparison with what is done by the free eating-rooms and bakeshops, in giving bread to the needy.

Why, the whole matter consists in the following: there are people, we will not say dying, but suffering from want; there are others living in abundance and out of the goodness of their hearts willing to share their superfluity with these sufferers; there are still others who are willing to be the mediators between these two classes and to give their labor to this end.

Can such activities be subjected to the interdiction of the authorities?[2]

I can understand why the soldier in the Borovitsky Gates, when I was going to give alms to a beggar, forbade me to do so, and paid no attention to my reference to the Gospels, but asked me if I had read the military code; he was a watchman. But the government authorities cannot be ignorant of the Gospels and forbid the fulfilment of the most fundamental morality — that is to say, that men should help one another.

The government, on the contrary, exists only so as to remove everything that prevents this help. So that the government has no grounds for its opposition to this activity. If the mendaciously guided organs of the government should demand subjection to such a pro-

[1] "And yet in 1891 and 1892 such subjection was not required." Omitted in Moscow edition.

[2] "Can such activities be harmful to any one and can it be a part of the duties of the government to oppose them?" Geneva edition.

hibition, a private citizen would be under obligations not to submit to such a demand.[1]

When the policeman who came to us said that it was my duty to apply to the governor with a petition to be allowed to establish the eating-rooms, I replied to him that I could not do that, since I did not know any statute whereby the establishment of free tables was interdicted; even if there had been any such I could not be subjected to it, because if I were subjected to such a law, the next day I might be reduced to the necessity of submitting to a prohibition against distributing flour, of giving any kind of alms without the permission of the government.

They may close the eating-rooms and bakeshops, they may send from one district to another those that come to help the population, but it is impossible to prevent those thus expelled from one district, from living in another among their friends or in some peasant izba, and serving the people in some other way, thus sharing with them their means and their labor. It is impossible to herd away one class of the people from another. Every attempt at such divisions induces the very consequences which this separation is intended to prevent. It is impossible to prevent communication among men; one can only interfere with the regular course of this communication, and give it a dangerous tendency where otherwise it would be beneficent.

To help the present, as indeed every, human need, only a spiritual elevation of the people can avail — I mean by the people, not only the peasantry, but the whole people, both the working-classes and the rich — and this elevation of the people will be only in one direction — in a greater and greater fraternal unity of men; and therefore, to help the people it needs to encourage this unity and not to stand in its way. Only by such a brotherly unity — greater than ever before —

[1] These two paragraphs are not in the Moscow edition: instead the following inoffensive sentences are substituted: "Moreover the government cannot do this. It is as impossible to prevent a man from eating when he is hungry as to prevent another man from giving this hungry one the superfluity of his bread, his property, or his labor."

will the actual poverty of this year and the prospective poverty of the year to come be relieved, and also the general prosperity of the ever declining peasantry be restored, and the possibility of a repetition of the misfortune of 1891 and 1892, and of the present year, be averted.

June 16, 1898.

PERSECUTION OF CHRISTIANS IN RUSSIA

"*In the world, ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.*" — JOHN xvi. 33.

THE Dukhobors[1] settled in the Caucasus have been subjected to cruel persecutions by the Russian authorities; and these persecutions, described in the report of one who made inquiries on the spot,[2] are now, at this moment, being carried on. These Dukhobors were beaten, whipped, and ridden down; quartered upon them in "executions" were Cossacks who, it is proved, allowed themselves every license with these people; and everything they did was with the consent of their officers. Those men who had refused military service were tortured, in body and in mind; and it is entirely true that a prosperous population, who by tens of years of hard toil had created their own prosperity, were expelled from their homes and settled, without land and without means of subsistence, in the Georgian villages.

The cause of these persecutions is, that for certain reasons three-fourths of the Dukhobors (that is, about 15,000 people, their whole population being about 20,000) have this year returned with renewed force and earnestness to their former Christian profession, and have

[1] The Russian word Dukhobortsui — from *Dukh*, "spirit," and *barets*, "a wrestler" — is the nickname popularly applied to the dissidents who refuse to use carnal weapons of defence. The simpler form "Dukhobors" is now generally employed. — ED.

[2] A detailed report of those persecutions, drawn up from personal observation by a friend and agent of Count Tolstoï, was published in the London *Times* of October 23, 1895.

resolved to comply in practice with Christ's law of non-resistance to evil by violence. This decision has caused them, on one hand, to destroy all their weapons, which are considered so needful in the Caucasus, thus renouncing the possibility of fighting, and putting themselves at the mercy of every marauder; and, on the other hand, to refuse, under all circumstances, participation in acts of force which may be demanded from them by the government; which means that they must refuse service in the army or wherever else violence is used. The government could not permit so many thousands of people such a desertion of the duties established by law, and a struggle broke out. The government demands compliance with its requirements; the Dukhobors will not obey.

The government cannot afford to yield. Not only because this refusal of the Dukhobors to comply with the requirements of government has, from the official standpoint, no legal justification, and is contradictory to the existing time-consecrated order; but such refusals must be discountenanced at once, for the sole reason that, if allowed to ten, to-morrow there will be a thousand, ten thousand, others who wish to escape the burden of the taxes and the conscription. And if this is allowed, there will spring up marauding and chaos instead of order and security; no one's property or life will be safe. Thus reason the authorities; they cannot reason otherwise; and they are not in the least at fault in so reasoning. Even without any such selfish consideration as that these desertions might deprive him of his means of subsistence, now collected from the people by means of compulsion, every official, from the Tsar down to the *uryadnik* or village police-commissioner, must be deeply indignant with the refusal of some uncivilized, unlettered people to comply with the demands of the government, which are obligatory upon all. "How dare these mere ciphers of people," thinks the official, "deny that which is recognized by every one, that which is consecrated by the law, and is practised everywhere?" As officials, they cannot be shown to be in error for

acting as they do. They use force, brute force. And they cannot avoid so doing.

In point of fact, how can you, by reasonable and humane means, compel men who profess the Christian religion to join another body of men who are learning how to kill, and practising for that purpose? The deception of deceived people can be maintained by various kinds of stupefactions — by administration of oaths, by theological, philosophical, and judicial sophistries. But as soon as the deception is by some means broken, and people like the Dukhobors, calling things by their right names, say, "We are Christians, and therefore we cannot kill," then the lie is exposed; and to persuade such men by arguments of reason is impossible. The only means of inducing them to obey are blows, "executions," deprivation of shelter, cold and hunger in their families. Just these means are used. As long as the officials are not conscious of their wrong position they can do nothing else; and therefore are not at fault. But still less are those Christians at fault who refuse to participate in murderous exercises, and to join a body of men who are trained to kill any whom the government orders to be killed. They, also, cannot act otherwise. The nominal Christian, baptized and brought up in Greek orthodoxy, Catholicism, Protestantism, might continue to follow violence and murder, as long as he does not discover the deception put upon him.

But as soon as he discovers that every man is responsible to God for his acts, and that this responsibility cannot be shifted to some one else or excused by the oath, and that he must not kill, or prepare himself to kill, then participation with the army at once becomes to him as impossible morally as it is physically impossible for him to lift a ton weight.

This fact of the Christian religion makes its relation to government a terrible tragedy. The tragedy arises from this, that the governments have to rule over nations which are Christian, though not yet wholly enlightened, but still every day and hour becoming more and more illumined with the teaching of Christ. All

"civilized" governments, from the days of Constantine, have known and felt this, and from the instinct of self-preservation have done everything they could to obscure the true idea of Christianity, and to destroy its spirit. They have known that when men become alive to this spirit, force will be abolished, together with government itself. Therefore the governments have continued to pursue their vocation by creating State institutions, by piling up laws and institutions one on the other, hoping under these to bury the undying spirit of Christ infused into the hearts of men. The governments have continued their labor, but at the same time the Christian teaching has done its work, more and more penetrating the minds and hearts of men. And now comes the time — which, Christianity being the work of God, opposed to government, which is man's work, was bound to come — when the effect of Christianity overcomes the effect of governments.

Just as in the burning of a pile there comes a moment when the fire which long worked obscurely within, only now and then by flashes and smoke proving its presence, suddenly wins its way on every side with a burning no longer to be subdued, so in the conflict of the Christian spirit with the pagan laws and institutions, there comes the time when this Christian spirit bursts forth everywhere, no longer to be kept under, and every moment threatening to destroy the institutions under which it was buried.

Indeed, what can, what must, government do with these 15,000 of the Dukhobors who refused military service? What is to be done with them? They cannot be let alone. Even now, at the beginning of the movement, there have appeared Greek Orthodox people who follow the example of the Dukhobors. What then, does the future hold? What if similar action is taken by the Molokans, Stundists, Shaloputy, Khlysty, the Pilgrims, all those sectarians who hold the same views as to government and military service, and who do not act as the Dukhobors have done, merely because they have not resolution to take the initiative, and fear

to suffer? Of such people there are millions; not in Russia only, but in all Christian countries; not only in Christian, but in Moslem countries; in Persia, Turkey, and Arabia, for instance, there are the Karidshity and the Babisty. It is needful to prevent contagion from these ten of thousands who acknowledge no government, and do not wish to take part in government. But how? Certainly they cannot be killed. They are too many. It is no less difficult to put them in prison. It is only possible to ruin and torture them. And just this is done.

But what if these tortures have not the desired effect, and these people still persist in declaring the truth, and by so doing attract more adherents? The position of governments is crucial; the more so that they can take no certain stand. You cannot denounce as bad the deeds of men like Drozhin, who was tortured to death in prison; or Izyumchenko, still suffering in Siberia; or Dr. Skarvan, imprisoned in Austria; or like all those others at present in prisons, — men who are ready to suffer and to die, only to be faithful to the most simple, universally comprehensible and approved religious principles, which prohibit murder and participation in murder.

By no device of logic can you demonstrate the acts of these men to be bad or unchristian; and not only are you unable to disapprove, but you cannot help admiring them. Because you must admit that men who so act, act in the name of the noblest qualities of man's soul, — qualities which, if you do not recognize their nobility, you reduce man's life to the level of animal existence. Therefore, however government acts toward these men, it must inevitably forward, not their, but its own, destruction. If government refrains from persecuting these people who, like the Dukhobors, Stundists, Nazarenes, and isolated individuals, refuse to take part in the acts of government, then the advantages of the peaceful Christian lives of these men will attract to them not only sincerely convinced Christians, but also those who will become Christians externally; and the

number of people who do not comply with the requirements of government will grow more and more.

On the other hand, if the government continues its cruelty as at present, then this very cruelty, to men whose only fault is that they lead a more moral and righteous life than others do, and seek to apply practically the law of righteousness which is professed by all, this very cruelty will more and more repel men's sympathy from government, and finally there will be no men ready to support it by force. The half-savage Cossacks who beat the Dukhobors by order of the officers, "very soon began to be tired of it," as they said when they were quartered in the villages of the Dukhobors. That means, conscience began to agitate them; and the authorities, fearing the influence of the Dukhobors upon them, hastened to withdraw them.

Never was a persecution of innocent people which has not ended in the persecutors receiving the principles of the persecuted; as it was with the warrior Simeon, who exterminated the Paulicians and then adopted their creed. The more indulgent the government, the quicker the numbers of true Christians will grow. The more cruel the government, the quicker the numbers of those that yield to the requirements of government diminishes. Thus, whether indulgent or cruel toward men who by their lives proclaim Christianity, government is forwarding its own destruction. "*Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out.*"[1] And this judgment was pronounced eighteen hundred years ago — that is, at the time when, in place of the principle of external justice, the principle of love was asserted.

However much wood one throws on the burning pile of sticks, thinking thus to put out the fire, the inextinguishable flame, the flame of truth, will only be temporarily smothered, and will burn up still more strongly, consuming everything heaped upon it. Even though it happen (as it always happens) that some of the contenders for truth become weak in the strife, and yield to the govern-

[1] John xii. 31.

ment, that, nevertheless, would not in the least change the position. If to-day the Dukhobors in the Caucasus should yield, being unable any longer to bear the sufferings which overcome their old men and women, their wives and children, still, to-morrow, there would arise other contenders, ready on all hands, more and more boldly proclaiming their principles, and less and less liable to yield. Does truth cease to be truth because the men who professed it become weak under the pressure of torture? That which is of God must conquer that which is of man.

"But what will happen if government is brought to an end?" I hear the question which is always put by those who think that if we lose that which we now have, then there will remain nothing, everything will be lost.

There is always the one answer to this question. There will be the thing which ought to be, that which is well-pleasing to God, which is according to the law He has put in our hearts and revealed to our minds. If government should be abolished by us in the way of revolution, certainly the question as to what will be after government is done away with would require an answer from the abolitionists. But the abolition which is now in process is taking place, not because some one, or some body of men, have resolved upon it, but government is being swept away because it is not according to the will of God which He has revealed to our minds and put into our hearts.

A man who refuses to kill and imprison his brother man does not purpose to destroy government; he merely wishes not to do that which is contrary to the will of God; he is merely avoiding that which not only he, but every one who is above the brute, undoubtedly considers evil. If through this, government be destroyed, it only shows that the demands of government are contrary to God's will — that is, they are evil; and thus government, being in itself an evil, comes to be destroyed. The change which is now taking place in the social life of the nations, although we cannot exactly tell what form it will take in the future, cannot be bad, because it proceeds, and will

be wrought out, not through man's arbitrary will, but as the result of a divine principle common to us all and resident in our hearts. A process of birth is going on, and our whole action must be directed not to thwart, but to help, this process. And such help is given, certainly not by resisting the divine truth revealed to us, but, on the contrary, by an open and fearless admission of it. Such admission of truth gives not only full satisfaction to the conscience of those who so profess, but also the greatest possible welfare to all; to the persecuted and to the persecutors as well. Salvation is not in retrogression, but in progression.

The crisis in the change of the form of our social life and in the replacement of forcible government by some other socializing principle, has passed already; and the solution before us is not by stoppage of the process, or by reversal of it, but by nothing else than a forward movement along that road which the law of Christ points out to the hearts of men.

Yet another effort, and the Galilean will conquer. Not in that ruthless sense understood by the pagan emperor, but in that true sense in which He Himself spoke of His conquest of the world. "*In the world you shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer*," said He, "*I have overcome the world.*"[1]

He has actually overcome the world; not in a mystical sense of invisible victory over sin, as these words are interpreted to mean by the theologians, but in the simple, clear, and comprehensible sense that, if we will only have courage and boldly profess Him, soon not only will those horrible persecutions of the body of true disciples of Christ who carry out His teaching practically in their lives disappear, but there will remain no more prisons or gallows, no wars, corruption, idleness, or toil-crushed poverty, under which Christian humanity now groans.

[1] John xvi. 33.

HELP![1]

THE facts related in this Appeal,[2] composed by three of my friends, have been repeatedly verified, revised, and sifted; the Appeal itself has been several times recast and corrected; everything has been rejected from it which, although true, might seem an exaggeration; so that all that is now stated in this Appeal is the real, indubitable truth, as far as the truth is accessible to men guided only by the religious desire, in this revelation of the truth, to serve God and their neighbor, both the oppressors and the oppressed. But, however striking the facts here related, their importance is determined, not by the facts themselves, but by the way in which they will be regarded by those who learn about them. And I fear that the majority of those who read this Appeal will not understand all its importance.

"Why, these fellows are a set of rioters; coarse, illiterate peasants; fanatics who have fallen under evil influence. They are a noxious, anti-governmental sect, which the Government cannot put up with, but evidently must suppress, as it suppresses every movement injurious to the general welfare. If women and children, innocent people, have to suffer thereby, well, what is to be done?"

This is what, with a shrug of the shoulders, people who have not penetrated the importance of this event will say.

On the whole, this phenomenon will, to most people, seem devoid of interest, like every phenomenon whose

[1] Published in *Christian Martyrdom* in Russia.

[2] Early in 1897, an Appeal on behalf of the Dukhobors was drawn up by three friends of Count Tolstoi's. The latter added this article to what his friends had written. His three friends were all banished for their offense.

place is strongly and clearly defined. Smugglers appear — they must be caught; anarchists, terrorists — society must get rid of them; fanatics, self-mutilators — they must be shut up, transported; infringers of public order appear — they must be suppressed. All this seems indisputable, evident, decisive, and therefore uninteresting.

And yet such an attitude toward what is related in this Appeal is a great error.

As in the life of each separate individual (I know this in my own life, and every one will find similar cases in his own), so also in the life of nations and humanity, events occur which constitute turning-points in their whole existence; and these events, like the "still small voice" (not the "great and strong wind") in which Elijah heard God, are always not loud, not striking, hardly remarkable; and in one's personal life one always afterward regrets that at the time one did not guess the importance of what was taking place.

"If I had known it was such an important moment in my life," one afterward thinks, "I should not have acted in such a way."

It is the same in the life of mankind. A Roman emperor enters Rome in noisy, pompous triumph — how important this seems; and how insignificant, it then seemed, that a Galilean was preaching a new doctrine, and was executed therefor, just as hundreds of others were executed for apparently similar crimes.

And so now, too, how important in the eyes of refined members of rival parties of the English, French, and Italian parliaments, or of the Austrian and German diets, and in the eyes of all the business men in the city and of the bankers of the whole world, and their press organs, are the questions as to who shall occupy the Bosporus, who shall seize some patch of land in Africa or Asia, who shall triumph in the question of bimetallism, and so on; and how, not only unimportant, but even so insignificant that they are not worth speaking about, seem the stories which tell that, somewhere in the Caucasus, the Russian government has

taken measures for crushing certain half-savage fanatics, who deny the obligation to submit to the authorities.

And yet, in reality, how not merely insignificant, but comic, beside the phenomena of such immense importance as are now taking place in the Caucasus, is the strange anxiety of full-grown people, educated, and illuminated by the teaching of Christ (or at least acquainted with this teaching, and capable of being illuminated by it), as to which country shall have this or that patch of land, and what words were uttered by this or that erring, stumbling mortal, who is merely a production of surrounding conditions.

Pilate and Herod, indeed, might not understand the importance of that for which the Galilean, who had disturbed their province, was brought before them for judgment; they did not even think it worth while learning wherein consisted His teaching; even had they known it, they might have been excused for thinking that it would disappear (as Gamaliel said); but we — we cannot but know the teaching itself, as well as the fact that it has not disappeared in the course of eighteen hundred years, and will not disappear until it is realized. And if we know this, then, notwithstanding the insignificance, illiterateness, and obscurity of the Dukhobors, we cannot but see the whole importance of that which is taking place among them. Christ's disciples were just such insignificant, unrefined, unknown people, and other than such the followers of Christ cannot be. Among the Dukhobors, or rather, "Christians of the Universal Brotherhood," as they now call themselves, nothing new is taking place, but merely the germinating of that seed which was sown by Christ eighteen hundred years ago, the resurrection of Christ Himself.

This resurrection must take place, cannot but take place, and it is impossible to shut one's eyes to the fact that it is taking place, merely because it is occurring without the firing of guns, parade of troops, planting of flags, illuminated fountains, music, electric lights, bell-ringing, and the solemn speeches and the cries of people

decorated with gold lace and ribbons. Only savages judge of the importance of phenomena by the outward splendor with which they are accompanied.

Whether we wish to see this or not, there has now been manifested in the Caucasus, in the life of the "Universal Brotherhood of Christians," especially since their persecution, a demonstration of that Christian life toward which all that is good and reasonable in the world is striving. For all our State institutions, our parliaments, societies, sciences, arts, — all this only exists and operates in order to realize that life which all of us, thinking men, see before us as the highest ideal of perfection. And here we have people who have realized this ideal, probably in part, not wholly, but have realized it in a way we did not dream of doing with our complex State institutions. How, then, can we avoid acknowledging the importance of this phenomenon? For that is being realized toward which we are all striving, toward which all our complex activity is leading us.

It is generally said, that such attempts at the realization of the Christian life have been made more than once already; there have been the Quakers, the Mennonites, and others, all of whom have weakened and degenerated into ordinary people, living the general life under the State. And, therefore, it is said such attempts at the realization of the Christian life are not of importance.

To say so is like saying that the pains of labor which have not yet ended in birth, that the warm rains and the sun-rays which have not as yet brought spring, are of no importance.

What, then, is important for the realization of the Christian life? It is certainly not by diplomatic negotiations about Abyssinia and Constantinople, papal encyclicals, socialistic congresses, and so on, that mankind will approach to that for which the world endures. For, if the kingdom of God, *i.e.* the kingdom on earth of truth and good, is to be realized, it can be realized only by such attempts as were made by the first disciples

of Christ, afterwards by the Paulicans, Albigenses, Quakers, Moravian Brethren, Mennonites, all the true Christians of the world, and now by the "Christians of the Universal Brotherhood."

The fact that these pains of labor continue and increase does not prove that there will be no birth, but, on the contrary, that the birth is near at hand. People say that this will happen, but not in that way, — in some other way, by books, newspapers, universities, theaters, speeches, meetings, congresses. But even if it be admitted that all these newspapers and books and meetings and universities help to the realization of the Christian life, yet, after all, the realization must be accomplished by living men, good men, with a Christian spirit, ready for righteous common life. Therefore, the main condition for the realization is the existence and gathering together of such people as shall even now realize that toward which we are all striving. And behold, these people exist!

It may be, although I doubt it, that the movement of the "Christian Universal Brotherhood" will also be stamped out, especially if society itself does not understand all the importance of what is taking place, and does not help them with brotherly aid; but that which this movement represents, that which has been expressed in it, will certainly not die, cannot die, and sooner or later will burst forth to the light, will destroy all that is now crushing it, and will take possession of the world. It is only a question of time.

True, there are people, and, unfortunately, there are many, who hope and say, "But not in our time," and therefore strive to arrest the movement. Yet their efforts are useless, and they do not arrest the movement, but by their efforts only destroy in themselves the life which is given them. For life is life, only when it is the carrying out of God's purpose. But, by opposing Him, people deprive themselves of life, and at the same time, neither for one year, nor for one hour, can they delay the accomplishment of God's purpose.

And it is impossible not to see that, with the outward

connection now established among all the inhabitants of the earth, with the awakening of the Christian spirit which is now appearing in all corners of the earth, this accomplishment is near at hand. And that obduracy and blindness of the Russian government, in directing persecution against the "Christians of the Universal Brotherhood," a persecution like those of pagan times, and the wonderful meekness and firmness with which the new Christian martyrs have endured these persecutions, — all these facts are undoubted signs of the nearness of this accomplishment.

And therefore, having understood all the importance of the event that is taking place, both for the life of the whole of humanity and for the life of each of us, remembering that the opportunity to act, which is now presented us, will never return, let us do that which the merchant in the Gospel parable did, selling all he possessed that he might obtain the priceless pearl; let us disdain all mean, selfish considerations, and let each of us, in whatever position he be, do all that is in his power, in order, — if not directly to help those through whom the work of God is being done, if not to partake in this work, — at least not to be the opponents of the work of God which is being accomplished for our good.

December 14, 1896.

THE EMIGRATION OF THE DUKHOBORS[1]

A POPULATION of twelve thousand people — "Christians of the Universal Brotherhood," as the Dukhobors, who live in the Caucasus, call themselves — are at the present moment in the most distressing circumstances.

Without entering into argument as to who is right: whether it be the governments who consider that Christianity is compatible with prisons, executions, and above all, with wars and preparations for war; or whether it be the Dukhobors, who acknowledge as binding only the Christian law (which renounces the use of any force whatever, and condemns murder), and who therefore refuse to serve in the army, — one cannot fail to see that this controversy is very difficult to settle. No government could allow some people to shun duties which are being fulfilled by all the rest, and to undermine thereby the very basis of the State. The Dukhobors, on the other hand, cannot disregard that very law which they consider as divine, and, consequently, as supremely obligatory.

Governments have hitherto found a way out of this dilemma, either by compelling those who refuse military service (on account of their religious convictions) to fulfil other duties, more difficult, but not in conflict with their religious beliefs, as has been done, and is still being done, in Russia with the Mennonites (who are compelled to do the usual term of service at government

[1] First published in the *Daily Chronicle*, London.

works); or else the governments do not recognize the legality of a refusal for religious reasons, and punish those that fail to obey a general law of the State, by putting them into prison for the usual term of service, as is done in Austria with the Nazarenes. But the present Russian government has found yet a third way of treating the Dukhobors — a way which one might have expected would be dispensed with in our time. Besides subjecting those that refuse military service to the most painful tortures, it systematically causes suffering to their fathers, mothers, and children, probably with the object of shaking — by the tortures of these innocent families — the resoluteness of the dissentients.

Not to mention the floggings, incarcerations, and every kind of tortures to which the Dukhobors who refused to serve in the army were subjected in the penal battalions, where many died, and their banishment to the worst parts of Siberia; not to mention the two hundred reserves, who, during the course of two years, languished in prison, and are now separated from their families, and exiled, in pairs, to the wildest parts of the Caucasus, where, deprived of every opportunity of earning a living, they are literally dying of starvation, — not to mention these punishments of those guilty of having refused to serve in the army, the families of the Dukhobors are being systematically ruined and exterminated.

They are all deprived of the right to leave the place where they live, and are heavily fined and imprisoned for non-compliance with the strangest demands of the authorities; for instance, for calling themselves by a different name from the one they are ordered to adopt, for fetching flour from a neighboring mill, for going from the village to a wood to gather fuel; a mother is even punished for visiting her son. And so the last resources of inhabitants formerly well-to-do are being quickly exhausted. In this way four hundred families have been expelled from their homes and settled in various Tartar and Georgian villages, where they, being obliged to pay for their lodgings and food, and not having any land or other means of subsistence, have

found themselves in such difficult circumstances that in the course of the three years since their removal, the fourth part of them, mostly old people and children, have already died from want and disease.

It is difficult to imagine that such a systematic extermination of a whole population of twelve thousand people should enter into the plans of the Russian government. It is probable that the superior authorities are unaware of that which is in reality going on, and even if they suspect it, they would not desire to know the details, feeling that they ought not to allow such a state of things to continue, and yet at the same time recognizing that what is being done is necessary.

At all events, it is certain that the Caucasian administration has been during the last three years regularly torturing, not only those that refuse to serve in the army, but also their families, and that in the same systematic way it is ruining and starving to death all the Dukhobors who were exiled.

All petitions in favor of the Dukhobors, and any assistance rendered them, have hitherto only led to the banishment from Russia of those who have interceded in their behalf, and to the expulsion from the Caucasus of those who have attempted to help these victims. The Caucasian administration has surrounded with a kind of Chinese wall the whole of an unsubmissive population, and this population is gradually dying out; another three or four years and probably not one of the Dukhobors will survive.

This would actually have happened, but for an incident, apparently unforeseen by the Caucasian government — namely, when last year the dowager-empress, having come to the Caucasus on a visit to her son, the Dukhobors succeeded in submitting to her a petition, asking for permission to be settled all together in some remote place, and if this should be impossible, to allow them to emigrate. The empress handed over this petition to the superior authorities, and the latter acknowledged the possibility of allowing the Dukhobors to emigrate.

It seems as if the problem were now solved, and that a way has been found out of a position burdensome for both sides. This, however, is only apparently the case.

The Dukhobors are now in a position which makes it impossible for them to emigrate. At present they have not sufficient means to do so, and being confined within their villages, they are unable to make any preparations. Formerly they were well-to-do, but during the last few years the greater part of their means has been taken away from them by confiscations and fines, or has been spent in maintaining their exiled brethren. As they are not allowed to leave the vicinity of their homes, and as nobody is allowed to see them, there is no possibility whatever for them to confer and decide upon the way of emigrating. The following letter describes, better than anything else could do, the position in which the Dukhobors now find themselves.

This is what a man, highly respected among them, writes to me: —

We inform you that we submitted a petition to her Imperial Majesty, the Empress Maria Feodorovna, who handed it over to the Senate. The result was the decree expressed in the enclosed official notification.

On February 10, I went to Tiflis, and there met our brother St. John;[1] but our meeting was of very short duration; they soon arrested both of us. I was put into prison, and he was immediately expelled from Russia.

I intimated to the chief of police that I had come on business to the governor. He said: "We will first imprison you, and afterward we will report you to the governor." On the 12th I was put into prison, and on the 19th I was taken to the governor, escorted by two soldiers. The chief clerk in the governor's office asked me, "Why were you arrested?" I said, "I don't know." "Was it you who were in Signakh lately?" "Yes, I was there." "And what did you come here for?" "I wish to see the governor; last summer we submitted a petition to the Empress Maria Feodorovna during her stay at Abostuman. I received an answer to the petition through the

[1] This is an ex-captain of the English army who took the Dukhobors some money collected for them in England.

head official of the Signakh district. I asked for a copy, but he refused, saying that he could not give one without the governor's permission — and this is why I have now come here."

He announced me to the governor, the governor called me in, and I explained to him the position of affairs. He said: "Instead of seeing me you made haste to meet the Englishman." I replied: "The Englishman is also our brother."

The governor talked to me kindly, and advised us to emigrate as soon as possible; he added: "You can all go, except those of you who are liable to be summoned at the next call to military service."

He also gave orders for me to be released from prison, and sent back to Signakh. We are, just now, meeting in council, and, with God's help, we will try to prepare for our emigration to England or America. And in this matter we ask for your brotherly assistance.

As to the position of our brethren, we inform you that Peter Vasilyevitch Verigin[1] has been ordered to remain for another term of five years. The brethren in the province of Kars are still, as before, being fined at every opportunity; they are still forbidden to leave their places of residence, and for non-compliance with this order they are put into prison for a term of one to two weeks. Diseases continue as before; but there are fewer deaths. Material want is most acutely experienced by the brethren of the Signakh district; those of the other districts, however, are somewhat better off.

And here is the official notification: —

The Fasting-Dukhobors,[2] who were expelled in the year 1895 from the district of Akhalkalak, and transported into other districts of the government of Tiflis, having submitted a petition to her Imperial Majesty the Empress Maria Feodorovna, asking either to be grouped and settled in one place, and to be exempt from the duties of military service, or to be allowed to emigrate, the following instructions have been received: —

1. The request for exemption from military service is refused.

[1] Verigin is one of their brethren who was at first banished to the government of Archangel, and afterward to Siberia, and who is now for the eleventh year in exile.

[2] The government thus designates those Dukhobors that have not consented to military service, and who also refrain from flesh foods.

2. The Fasting-Dukhobors — with the exception, of course, of those that have reached the age at which they can be summoned to the duties of military service, and of those who have failed to fulfil those duties — may emigrate under these conditions: — (*a*) That they provide themselves with a foreign passport, in accordance with the established order; (*b*) that they leave Russia at their own expense; and (*c*) that before leaving they sign an agreement never to return within the borders of the empire, understanding that in the case of non-compliance with this last point the offender will be condemned to exile to remote places.

As to their request to be settled in one village, it is refused.

This notification is issued by order of the governor of Tiflis to one of the petitioning Fasting-Dukhobors, Vasili Potapof, in answer to his personal application.

TIFLIS, February 21, 1898.

People are permitted to emigrate, but they have previously been ruined, so that they have nothing to emigrate with, and the circumstances in which they find themselves are such as to render it absolutely impossible for them to know where to go and how to arrange the migration, and they are even unable to make use of the assistance extended to them from outside, since all those that attempt to help them are immediately expelled, and the Dukhobors themselves are put into prison for each absence from their homes.

Thus, if no assistance can be rendered them from outside, they will in the end be completely ruined, and will all die out, notwithstanding the permission given them to emigrate.

I happen to know the details of the persecutions and sufferings of these people; I am in communication with them, and they ask me to help them. Therefore I consider it my duty to address myself to all good people, whether Russian or not Russian, asking them to help the Dukhobors out of the terrible position in which they now are. I have attempted to address myself, through the medium of a Russian newspaper, to the Russian public, but do not know as yet whether my appeal will be published or not; and I now address myself once more

to all sympathizers, asking for their assistance — first, in the form of money, of which much will be needed for the removal to a distant place of ten thousand people; and secondly, of advice and guidance in the difficulties of the coming emigration of people who do not understand any foreign language and have never left Russia before.

I trust that the leading authorities of the Russian government will not prevent such assistance from being rendered, and that they will check the excessive zeal of the Caucasian administration, which is, at the present moment, not admitting any communication whatever with the Dukhobors.....[1]

April 1, 1898.

[1] Count Tolstoï's appeal was heeded. A considerable sum of money was collected; the English and American Quakers with especial alacrity came to the aid of those who were persecuted for practising the Quaker principles of non-resistance; a large tract of land was granted by the Dominion of Canada for their settlement. Ships were chartered to bring the exiles across the ocean, and finally, in the spring of 1899, the Dukhobors were landed on the shores of America and, like the Pilgrim fathers, given freedom to worship God in their own manner and to wrest a living from the abundant though latent resources of the as yet unbroken wilderness. — Ed.

NOBEL'S BEQUEST

A LETTER ADDRESSED TO A SWEDISH EDITOR

THERE has lately appeared in the papers information that in connection with Nobel's will the question has been discussed as to who should be chosen to receive the £10,000 bequeathed to the person who has best served the cause of peace. This has called forth certain considerations in me, and you will greatly oblige me by publishing them in your paper.

I think this point in Nobel's will concerning those who have best served the cause of peace is very difficult. Those who do indeed serve this cause do so because they serve God, and are therefore not in need of pecuniary recompense, and will not accept it. But I think the condition expressed in the will would be quite correctly fulfilled if the money were transmitted to the destitute and suffering families of those who have served the cause of peace.

I am alluding to the Caucasian Dukhobors or Spirit-Wrestlers. No one in our time has served, and is continuing to serve, the cause of peace more effectively and powerfully than these people.

Their service of the cause of peace consists in this. A whole population, more than ten thousand persons, having come to the conviction that a Christian cannot be a murderer, decided not to participate in the military service. Thirty-four men who were summoned to enter the service refused to take the oath and serve, for which they have been confined to a penal battalion — one of the most dreadful of punishments. About three

hundred men of the reserve returned their certificates[1] to the authorities, declaring that they could not and would not serve. These three hundred men were incarcerated in the Caucasian prisons, their families being transported from their homes and settled in Tartar and Georgian villages, where they have neither land nor work to live by.

Notwithstanding the admonitions of the authorities, and threats that they and their families will continue to suffer until they consent to fulfil military duties, those who have refused to do so do not change their decision. And their relatives — their fathers, mothers, wives, sisters — not only do not seek to dissuade them from, but encourage them in, this decision. These men say: —

"We are Christians, and therefore cannot consent to be murderers. You may torture and kill us, we cannot hinder that, but we cannot obey you, because we profess that same Christian teaching which you yourself also accept."

These words are very simple, and, so far from being new, it seems strange to repeat them. Nevertheless, these words, spoken in our time and under the conditions in which the Dukhobors find themselves, have a great importance. In our time everybody speaks of peace, and of the means of instituting it. Peace is spoken of by professors, writers, members of Parliament and of peace societies, and these same professors, writers, members of Parliament and of peace societies, when the occasion offers, express patriotic feelings; and when their time comes they quietly enter the ranks of the army, believing that war will cease, not through their efforts, but through somebody else's, and not in their time, but in some time to come.

Priests and pastors preach about peace in their churches, and zealously pray God for it, but they are careful not to tell their flocks that war is incompatible with Christianity. All the emperors, kings, and presidents, traveling from capital to capital, lose no oppor-

[1] Men in the army reserve have certificates showing the position they occupy in the service. — Tr.

tunity to speak of peace. They speak of peace when embracing each other at the railway stations; they speak of peace when receiving deputations and presents; they speak of peace with a glass of wine in their hands, at dinners and suppers; above all they lose no opportunity to speak of peace in front of those same troops which are collected for murder, and of which they boast one before another.

And, therefore, in the midst of this universal falsehood, the conduct of the Dukhobors, who say nothing about peace, but only say that they themselves do not wish to be murderers, has a special significance, because it exhibits to the world that ancient, simple, unerring, and only means of establishing peace long ago revealed to man by Christ, but from which the people of former times were so far off that it seemed impracticable; while in our time it has become so natural that one can only be astonished how it is that all men of the Christian world have not yet adopted it.

This means is simple, because for its application it is not necessary to undertake anything new, but only for each man of our time himself to refrain from doing that which he regards as bad and shameful for himself as well as for others; and not to consent to be the slave of those who prepare men for murder. This means is certain, because, if Christians were only to admit — what they must admit — that a Christian cannot be a murderer, there would then be no soldiers; because all are Christians, and there would be lasting and inviolable peace between them. And this means is the only one, because, as long as Christians will not regard participation in the military service as impossible for themselves, so long will ambitious men involve others in this service, and there will be armies; and if there be armies, there will also be wars.

I know this means has already for long been practised. I know how the ancient Christians who refused the military service were executed by the Romans for doing so (these refusals are described in the lives of the saints). I know how the Paulicians were, every one of

them, destroyed for the same conduct. I know how the Bogomili were persecuted, and how the Quakers and Mennonites suffered for this same cause. I know also how, at the present time, in Austria, the Nazarenes are languishing in prisons; and how people have been martyred in Russia.

But the fact that all these martyrdoms have not abolished war in no way proves that they have been useless. To say that this means is not efficacious because it has already been applied for a long time and yet war still exists, is the same as to say that in spring the sun's warmth is not efficacious because the ground has not yet become bare of snow, and flowers have not yet sprung up.

The meaning of these refusals in former times and now is quite different; then they were the first rays of the sun falling on the frozen winter earth, now they are the last touch of warmth necessary to destroy the remains of the seeming winter which has lost its power. And in fact there never was before that which now is; never before was the absurdity so evident that all men, without exception, strong and weak, disposed for war and abhorring it, should be equally obliged to take part in military service; or that the greater part of the national wealth should be spent on continually increasing military preparations; never before was it so clear as in our time that the continual excuse for the gathering and maintenance of armies — the supposed necessity of defense from an imaginary attack of enemies — has no basis in reason, and that all these threats of attack are only the invention of those to whom armies are necessary for their own purpose of maintaining power over the nations.

It has never occurred before, that war threatened man with such dreadful devastations and calamities, and such massacres of whole populations, as it does at the present time. And, lastly, never before have those feelings of unity and good-will among nations owing to which war appears to be something dreadful, immoral, senseless, and fratricidal, been so widely spread. But, above all,

never, as it is now, was the deceit so evident by which some people compel others to prepare for war, burdensome, unnecessary, and abhorrent to all.

It is said that, to destroy war by this means, too much time would have to elapse; that a long process of the union of all men in the one and the same desire to avoid participation in war would have to be gone through. But love of peace and abhorrence of war, like love of health and abhorrence of disease, have long since been the continual and general desire of all men not corrupted, intoxicated, and deluded.

So that, if peace has not yet been established, it is not because there does not exist among men the universal desire for it; it is not because there is no love for peace and abhorrence of war; but only because there exists the cunning deceit by which men have been, and are, persuaded that peace is impossible and war indispensable. And therefore, to establish peace amongst men, first of all amongst Christians, and to abolish war, it is not necessary to inculcate in men anything new; it is only necessary to liberate them from the deceit which has been instilled into them, causing them to act contrary to their general desire. This deceit is being more and more revealed by life itself, and in our time it is so far revealed that only a small effort is necessary in order that men should completely free themselves from it. Precisely this effort the Dukhobors are making in our time by their refusal of the military service.

The conduct of the Dukhobors is tearing off the last covering which hides the truth from man. And the Russian government knows this, and is endeavoring with all its strength to keep up, if only for a time, that deceit upon which its power is founded; and that government is, for this purpose, using the cruel and secret measures usual, in such cases, to those who know their guilt.

The Dukhobors who have refused the military services are confined to penal battalions and exiled to the worst parts of Siberia and the Caucasus; while their families — old men, children, wives — are driven out of

their dwellings and settled in localities where, homeless and without means of earning their food, they are gradually dying out from want and disease. And all this is being done in the greatest secrecy. Those incarcerated in prisons, and those who are being exiled, are kept separate from every one else; the exiled are not allowed to communicate with Russians, they are kept exclusively among non-Russian tribes, true information concerning the Dukhobors is forbidden in the press, letters from them are not forwarded, letters to them do not reach them, special police guard against any communication between the Dukhobors and Russians, forbidding it; and those who have endeavored to help the Dukhobors, and spread information about them among the public, have been banished to distant places or else altogether exiled from Russia. And, as is always the case, these measures only produce the reverse result to that which the government desires.

In our time it is impossible unperceived to sweep off the face of the earth a religious, moral, and industrious population of ten thousand souls. Those same people, soldiers and jailers, who guard the Dukhobors, those tribes amongst whom they are dispersed, also those individuals who, notwithstanding all the efforts of the government, communicate with the Dukhobors, — all these discover that for which, and in the name of which, the Dukhobors are suffering; they find out the utterly inexcusable cruelty of the government and its fear of publicity; and men who formerly never doubted the lawfulness of the government and compatibility of Christianity with the military service, not only begin to have doubts, but are becoming completely persuaded of the rightness of the Dukhobors, and of the falsity of the government, and are liberating themselves and others from the deceit which has held them up to this time.

And it is this liberation from deceit and consequent approach toward the effectual establishment of peace on earth which to-day constitutes the great worth of the Dukhobors.

This is why I believe that no one has served the cause of peace in a greater degree than they have. The dreadful condition in which their families at present find themselves[1] justifies one in affirming that no one can with greater justice be awarded the money which Nobel bequeathed to those that have best served the cause of peace.

[1] Information concerning them can be found in a book lately published in English, entitled, "Christian Martyrdom in Russia." It is edited by Vladimir Tcherkof, with concluding chapter and letter by Count Tolstoï. — Ed.

November, 1897.

LETTER TO ERNEST HOWARD CROSBY

I AM very glad to have news of your activity, and to hear that your work begins to attract attention. Fifty years ago Lloyd Garrison's Declaration of Non-resistance only estranged people from him; and Ballou's fifty years' labor in the same direction was constantly met by a conspiracy of silence. I now read with great pleasure, in the *Voice*, admirable thoughts by American writers on this question of non-resistance. I need only demur to the notion expressed by Mr. Bemis. It is an old but unfounded libel upon Christ to suppose that the expulsion of the cattle from the temple indicates that Jesus beat people with a whip, and advised His disciples to behave in a like manner.[1] The opinions expressed by these writers, especially by Heber Newton and George D. Herron, are quite correct · but unfortunately they do not reply to the problem which Christ put to men, but to another, which has been substituted for it by those chief and most dangerous opponents of Christianity, the so-called "orthodox" ecclesiastical authorities.

Mr. Higginson says: "I do not believe non-resistance admissible as a universal rule." Heber Newton says that people's opinion as to the practical result of the application of Christ's teaching will depend on the extent of people's belief in His authority. Carlos Martyn considers the transition stage in which we live not suited for the application of the doctrine of non-resistance. George D. Herron holds that to obey the law of non-

[1] See our Revised Version of John ii. 15, which, as amended in translation, clearly shows that Jesus used the scourge only for "both the sheep and the oxen." — ED.

resistance we must learn how to apply it to life. Mrs. Livermore, thinking that the law of non-resistance can be fully obeyed only in the future, says the same. All these views refer to the question, "What would happen if people were all obliged to obey the law of non-resistance?"

But, in the first place, it is impossible to oblige every one to accept the law of non-resistance. Secondly, if it were possible to do so, such compulsion would in itself be a direct negation of the very principle set up. Oblige all men to refrain from violence? Who then should enforce the decision? Thirdly, and this is the chief point, the question, as put by Christ, is not at all, "Can non-resistance become a general law for humanity?" but, "How must each man act to fulfil his allotted task, to save his soul, and to do the will of God, three things which are really one and the same thing?"

Christian teaching does not lay down laws for everybody, and does not say to people, "You all, for fear of punishment, must obey such and such rules, and then you will all be happy"; but it explains to each individual his position in relation to the world, and gives him to see what results, for him individually, inevitably flow from that relation. Christianity says to mankind (and to each man separately), that a man's personal life can have no rational meaning if he counts it as belonging to himself or as having for its aim worldly happiness for himself or for other people. This is so, because the happiness he seeks is unattainable—(1) for the reason that, all beings striving after worldly advantages, the gain of one is the loss of others, and it is most probable that each individual will incur much superfluous suffering in the course of his vain effort to seize unattainable blessings; (2) because, even if a man gains worldly advantages, the more he obtains the less he is satisfied, and the more he hankers after fresh ones; (3) and chiefly because the longer a man lives the more irresistible becomes the approach of old age, sickness, death, destroying all possibility of worldly advantages. So that if man considers his life to be his own, to be spent in

seeking worldly happiness for himself as well as for others, then that life can have no rational explanation for him. Life takes a rational meaning only when one understands that, to consider our life our own, or to see its aim in worldly happiness for ourselves or for other people, is a delusion; that a man's life does not belong to him who has received it, but to Him who has given it; and therefore its object should be, not the attainment of worldly happiness, either for one's self or for other individuals, but solely to fulfil the will of Him, the Creator of this life.

This conception alone gives life a rational meaning, and makes life's aim (which is to fulfil the will of God) attainable. And, most important of all, only when enlightened by this conception does man see clearly the right direction for his own activity. Man is then no longer destined to suffer and to despair, as was inevitable under the former conception. "The universe and I in it," says a man of this conception to himself, "exist by the will of God. I cannot know the whole of the universe, for in immensity it transcends my comprehension; nor can I know my own position in it; but I do know with certainty what God, who has sent me into this world, infinite in time and space, and therefore incomprehensible to me, demands from me. This is revealed to me (1) by the collective wisdom of the best men who have gone before me, *i.e.* by tradition; (2) by my own reason; and (3) by my heart, *i.e.* by the highest aspirations of my nature.

Tradition — the collective wisdom of my greatest forerunners — tells me that I should do unto others as I would that they should do unto me. My reason shows me that only by all men acting thus is the highest happiness for all men attainable. Only when I yield myself to that intuition of love which demands obedience to this law is my own heart happy and at rest. And not only can I then know how to act, but I can and do discern that work, to coöperate in which my activity was designed and is required. I cannot fathom God's whole design, for the sake of which the universe exists and

lives; but the divine work which is being accomplished in this world, and in which I participate by living, is comprehensible to me.

This work is the annihilation of discord and strife among men, and among all creatures; and the establishment of the highest unity, concord, and love. It is the fulfilment of the promises of the Hebrew prophets, who foretold a time when all men should be taught by truth, when spears should be turned into reaping-hooks, swords be beaten to plowshares, and the lion lie down with the lamb. So that a man of Christian intelligence not only knows what he has to do, but he also understands the work he is doing. He has to act so as to coöperate toward the establishment of the kingdom of God on earth. For this, a man must obey his intuition of God's will, *i.e.* he must act lovingly toward others, as he would that others should act toward him. Thus the intuitive demands of man's soul coincide with the external aim of life which he sees before him.

Man in this world, according to Christian teaching, is God's laborer. A laborer does not know his master's whole design, but he does know the immediate object which he is set to work at. He receives definite instructions what to do, and especially what not to do, lest he hinder the attainment of the very ends toward which his labor must tend. For the rest he has full liberty given him. And therefore, for a man who has grasped the Christian conception of life, the meaning of his life is perfectly plain and reasonable; nor can he have a moment's hesitation as to how he should act, or what he should do to fulfil the object for which he lives.

And yet, in spite of such a twofold indication, clear and indubitable to a man of Christian understanding of what is the real aim and meaning of human life, and of what men should do and should not do, we find people (and people calling themselves Christians) who decide that in such and such circumstances men ought to abandon God's law and reason's guidance, and act in opposition to them; because, according to their conception,

the effects of actions performed in submission to God's law may be detrimental or inconvenient.

According to the law, contained alike in tradition, in our reason, and in our hearts, man should always do unto others as he would that they should do unto him; he should always coöperate in the development of love and union among created beings. But on the contrary, in the judgment of these people who look ahead, as long as it is premature, in their opinion, to obey this law, man should do violence, imprison or kill people, and thereby evoke anger and venom instead of loving union in the hearts of men. It is as if a bricklayer, set to do a particular task, and knowing that he was coöperating with others to build a house, after receiving clear and precise instructions from the master himself how to build a certain wall, should receive from some fellow bricklayers (who like himself knew neither the plan of the house nor what would fit in with it) orders to cease building his wall, and instead rather to pull down a wall which other workmen had erected.

Astonishing delusion! A being who breathes one day and vanishes the next receives one definite, indubitable law to guide him through the brief term of his life; but instead of obeying that law he prefers to fancy that he knows what is necessary, advantageous, and well-timed for men, for all the world — this world which continually shifts and evolves; and for the sake of some advantage (which each man pictures after his own fancy) he decides that he and other people should temporarily abandon the indubitable law given to one and to all, and should act, not as they would that others should act toward them, bringing love into the world, but instead do violence, imprison, kill, and bring into the world enmity whenever it seems profitable to do so. And he decides to act thus, though he knows that the most horrible cruelties, martyrdoms, and murders — from the inquisitions, and the murders, and horrors of all the revolutions, down to the violences of contemporary anarchists, and their slaughter by the established authorities — have only occurred because people will

imagine that they know what are necessary for mankind and for the world. But are there not always, at any given moment, two opposite parties, each of which declares that it is necessary to use force against the other — the "law and order" party against the "anarchist"; the "anarchist" against the "law and order" men; English against Americans, and Americans against English; Germans against English, and English against Germans; and so forth in all possible combinations and rearrangements?

A man enlightened by Christianity sees that he has no reason to abandon the law of God, given to enable him to walk with sure foot through life, in order to follow the chance, inconstant, and often contradictory demands of men. But besides this, if he has lived a Christian life for some time, and has developed in himself a Christian moral sensibility, he literally cannot act as people demand of him. Not this reason only, but his feeling also, makes it impossible. To many people of our society it would be impossible to torture or kill a baby, even if they were told that by so doing they could save hundreds of people. And in the same way a man, when he has developed a Christian sensibility of heart, finds a whole series of actions are become impossible for him. For instance, a Christian who is obliged to take part in judicial proceedings in which a man may be sentenced to death, or who is obliged to take part in evictions, or in debating a proposal leading to war, or to participate in preparations for war (not to mention war itself), is in a position parallel to that of a kindly man called on to torture or to kill a baby. It is not reason alone that forbids him to do what is demanded of him; he feels instinctively that he cannot do it. For certain actions are morally impossible, just as others are physically impossible. As a man cannot lift a mountain, and as a kindly man cannot kill an infant, so a man living the Christian life cannot take part in deeds of violence. Of what value then to him are arguments about the imaginary advantages of doing what is morally impossible for him to do?

But how is a man to act when he sees clearly an evil in following the law of love and its corollary law of non-resistance? How (to use the stock example) is a man to act when he sees a criminal killing or outraging a child, and he can only save the child by killing the criminal? When such a case is put, it is generally assumed that the only possible reply is that one should kill the assailant to save the child. But this answer is given so quickly and decidedly only because we are all so accustomed to the use of violence, not only to save a child, but even to prevent a neighboring government altering its frontier at the expense of ours, or to prevent some one from smuggling lace across that frontier, or even to defend our garden fruit from a passer-by. It is assumed that to save the child the assailant should be killed.

But it is only necessary to consider the question, "On what grounds ought a man, whether he be or be not a Christian, to act so?" in order to come to the conclusion that such action has no reasonable foundation, and only seems to us necessary because up to two thousand years ago such conduct was considered right, and a habit of acting so had been formed. Why should a non-Christian, not acknowledging God, and not regarding the fulfilment of His will as the aim of life, decide to kill the criminal in order to defend the child? By killing the former he kills for certain; whereas he cannot know positively whether the criminal would have killed the child or not. But letting that pass, who shall say whether the child's life was more needed, was better, than the other's life? Surely, if the non-Christian knows not God, and does not see life's meaning to be in the performance of His will, the only rule for his actions must be a reckoning, a conception, of which is more profitable for him and for all men, a continuation of the criminal's life or of the child's. To decide that, he needs to know what would become of the child whom he saves, and what, had he not killed him, would have been the future of the assailant. And as he cannot know this, the non-Christian has no sufficient rational ground for killing a robber to save a child.

If a man be a Christian, and consequently acknowledges God, and sees the meaning of life in fulfilling His will, then, however ferocious the assailant, however innocent and lovely the child, he has even less ground to abandon the God-given law, and to do to the criminal as the criminal wishes to do to the child. He may plead with the assailant, may interpose his own body between the assailant and the victim; but there is one thing he cannot do — he cannot deliberately abandon the law he has received from God, the fulfilment of which alone gives meaning to his life. Very probably bad education, or his animal nature, may cause a man, Christian or non-Christian, to kill an assailant, not to save a child, but even to save himself or to save his purse. But it does not follow that he is right in acting thus, or that he should accustom himself or others to think such conduct right. What it does show is that, notwithstanding a coating of education and of Christianity, the habits of the stone age are yet so strong in man that he still commits actions long since condemned by his reasonable conscience.

I see a criminal killing a child, and I can save the child by killing the assailant — therefore, in certain cases, violence must be used to resist evil. A man's life is in danger, and can be saved only by my telling a lie — therefore, in certain cases, one must lie. A man is starving, and I can only save him by stealing — therefore, in certain cases, one must steal. I lately read a story by Coppée, in which an orderly kills his officer, whose life was insured, and thereby saves the honor and the family of the officer, the moral being that, in certain cases, one must kill. Such devices, and the deductions from them, only prove that there are men who know that it is not well to steal, to lie, or to kill, but who are still so unwilling that people should cease to do these things that they use all their mental powers to invent excuses for such conduct. There is no moral law concerning which one might not devise a case in which it is difficult to decide which is more moral, to disobey the law or to obey it? But all such devices fail to

prove that the laws, "Thou shalt not lie, steal, or kill," are invalid.

It is thus with the law of non-resistance. People know it is wrong to use violence, but they are so anxious to continue to live a life secured by "the strong arm of the law," that, instead of devoting their intellects to the elucidation of the evils which have flowed, and are still flowing, from admitting that man has a right to use violence to his fellow-men, they prefer to exert their mental powers in defense of that error. "*Fais ce que dois, advienne que pourra*" — "Do what's right, come what may" — is an expression of profound wisdom. We each can know indubitably what we ought to do, but what results will follow from our actions we none of us either do or can know. Therefore it follows that, besides feeling the call of duty, we are further driven to act as duty bids us by the consideration that we have no other guidance, but are totally ignorant of what will result from our action.

Christian teaching indicates what a man should do to perform the will of Him who sent him into life; and discussion as to what results we anticipate from such or such human actions have nothing to do with Christianity, but are just an example of the error which Christianity eliminates. None of us has ever yet met the imaginary criminal with the imaginary child, but all the horrors which fill the annals of history and of our own times came, and come, from this one thing, namely, that people will believe they really foresee speculative future results of actions.

The case is this. People once lived an animal life, and violated or killed whom they thought well to violate or to kill. They even ate one another, and public opinion approved of it. Thousands of years ago, as far back as the times of Moses, a day came when people had realized that to violate or kill one another is bad. But there were people for whom the reign of force was advantageous, and these did not approve of the change, but assured themselves and others that to do deeds of violence and to kill people is not always bad, but that there

are circumstances when it is necessary and even moral. And violence and slaughter, though not so frequent or so cruel as before, continued, only with this difference, that those who committed or commended such acts excused themselves by pleading that they did it for the benefit of humanity.

It was just this sophistical justification of violence that Christ denounced. When two enemies fight, each may think his own conduct justified by the circumstances. Excuses can be made for every use of violence, and no infallible standard has ever been discovered by which to measure the worth of these excuses. Therefore Christ taught us to disbelieve in any excuse for violence, and (contrary to what had been taught by them of old times) never to use violence. One would have thought that those who have professed Christianity would be indefatigable in exposing deception in this matter; for in such exposure lay one of the chief manifestations of Christianity. What really happened was just the reverse. People who profited by violence, and who did not wish to give up their advantages, took on themselves a monopoly of Christian preaching, and declared that, as cases can be found in which non-resistance causes more harm than the use of violence (the imaginary criminal killing the imaginary child), therefore Christ's doctrine of non-resistance need not always be followed; and that one may deviate from His teaching to defend one's life or the life of others; or to defend one's country, to save society from lunatics or criminals, and in many other cases.

The decision of the question in what cases Christ's teaching should be set aside was left to the very people who employed violence. So that it ended by Christ's teaching on the subject of not resisting evil by violence being completely annulled. And what was worst of all was that the very people Christ denounced came to consider themselves the sole preachers and expositors of His doctrines. But the light shines through the darkness, and Christ's teaching is again exposing the pseudo-teachers of Christianity. We may think about rearrang-

ing the world to suit our own taste — no one can prevent that; and we may try to do what seems to us pleasant or profitable, and with that object treat our fellow creatures with violence on the pretext that we are doing good. But so acting we cannot pretend that we follow Christ's teaching, for Christ denounced just this deception. Truth sooner or later reappears, and the false teachers are shown up, which is just what is happening to-day.

Only let the question of man's life be rightly put, as Christ put it, and not as it has been perversely put by the Church, and the whole structure of falsehood which the Church has built over Christ's teaching will collapse of itself. The real question is not whether it will be good or bad for a certain human society that people should follow the law of love and the consequent law of non-resistance. But it is this: Do you, who to-day live and to-morrow will die, you who are indeed tending deathward every moment, do you wish now, immediately and entirely, to obey the law of Him who sent you into life, and who clearly showed you His will, alike in tradition and in your mind and heart; or do you prefer to resist His will? And as soon as the question is put thus, only one reply is possible: I wish now, this moment, without delay or hesitation, to the very utmost of my strength, neither waiting for any one or counting the cost, to do that which alone is clearly demanded by Him who sent me into the world; and on no account, and under no conditions, do I wish to, or can I, act otherwise — for herein lies my only possibility of a rational and unharassed life.

PATRIOTISM, OR PEACE?

[The following letter, called forth by the dispute about Venezuela between the United States and England, was written by Count Tolstoï to an English correspondent, and first appeared in the *Daily Chronicle of* March 17, 1896.]

YOU write asking me to state my opinion on the case between the United States and England, "in the cause of Christian consistency and true peace," and you express the hope "that the nations may soon be awakened to the only means of insuring international peace."

I entertain the same hope; and for this reason. The complication which, in our time, involves the nations: exalting patriotism as they do, educating the young generation in that superstition, and at the same time shirking that inevitable consequence of patriotism, war, — has, it seems to me, reached that last degree at which the very simplest consideration, such as suggests itself to every unbiased person, may suffice to show to men the extreme contradiction in which they are placed.

Often, when one asks children which they choose of two incompatible but eagerly desired things, they will answer, "Both." "Which do you wish — to go for a drive, or to play at home?" "To go for a drive and to play at home."

Exactly so with the Christian nations, when life itself puts the question to them, "Which do you choose — patriotism or peace?" They answer, "Patriotism and peace." And yet to combine patriotism and peace is just as impossible as to go for a drive and to stay at home at one and the same time.

The other day a conflict arose between the United States and England over the frontier of Venezuela. Salisbury did not agree to something; Cleveland wrote a message to the Senate; patriotic, warlike cries were raised on both sides; a panic occurred on 'Change; people lost millions of pounds and dollars; Edison said he was devising machines to kill more men in an hour than were killed by Attila in all his wars; and both nations began to make energetic preparations for war.

But, together with these preparations for war, alike in England and America, various writers, princes, and statesmen began to counsel the governments of both nations to keep from war, insisting that the matter in dispute was not sufficiently serious for war, especially as between two Anglo-Saxon nations, peoples of one language, who ought not to go to war with each other, but ought rather in amity together to domineer over others. Whether because of this, or because all kinds of bishops, clergymen, and ministers prayed and preached over the matter in their churches, or because both sides considered they were not yet ready; for one cause or another, it has turned out there is to be no war this time. And people have calmed down.

But one would have too little penetration not to see that the causes which have thus led to dispute between England and the States still remain the same; that if the present difficulty is settled without war, yet, inevitably, to-morrow or next day, disputes must arise between England and the States, between England and Germany, England and Russia, England and Turkey, disputes in all possible combinations. Such arise daily; and one or other of them will surely bring war.

For, if there live side by side two armed men, who have from childhood been taught that power, riches, and glory are the highest goods, and that to obtain these by arms, to the loss of one's neighbors, is a most praiseworthy thing; and if, further, there is for these men no moral, religious, or political bond, — then is it not clear that they will always seek war, that their normal relations will be warlike, and that having once caught each

other by the throat, they separate again only, as the French proverb has it, *pour mieux sauter*, — they draw back to take a better spring, to rush upon each other with more ferocity?

The egoism of the individual is terrible. But the egoists of private life are not armed; they do not count it good to prepare, or to use, arms against their competitors; their egoism is controlled by the powers of the state and of public opinion. A private person who should, arm in hand, deprive his neighbor of a cow or an acre of field would be at once seized by the police and imprisoned. Moreover, he would be condemned by public opinion, called a thief and a robber. Quite otherwise with states. All are armed. Influence over them there is none; more than those absurd attempts to catch a bird by sprinkling salt on its tail, such as are the efforts to establish international congresses, which armed states (armed, forsooth, that they may be above taking advice) will clearly never accept. And above all, the public opinion which punishes every violent act of the private individual, praises, exalts as the virtue of patriotism, every appropriation of other people's property made with a view of increasing the power of one's own country.

Open the newspapers on any day you like, and you will always see, every moment, some black spot, a possible cause for war. Now it is Korea; again the Pamirs, Africa, Abyssinia, Armenia, Turkey, Venezuela, or the Transvaal. The work of robbery ceases not for an instant; now here, now there, some small war is going on incessantly, like the exchange of shots in the first line; and a great real war may, must, begin at some moment.

If the American desires the greatness and prosperity of the States before all nations, and the Englishman desires the same for his nation, and the Russian, Turk, Dutchman, Abyssinian, Venezuelan, Boer, Armenian, Pole, Czech, each have a similar desire; if all are convinced that these desires ought not to be concealed and suppressed, but, on the contrary, are something to be proud of, and to be encouraged in oneself and in others;

and if one's country's greatness and prosperity can be obtained only at the expense of another, or at times of many other countries and nations, — then how can war not be?

Obviously, to avoid war, it is necessary, not to preach sermons and pray God for peace, not to adjure the English-speaking nations to live in peace together in order to domineer over other nations, not to make double and triple counter-alliances, not to intermarry princes and princesses, but to destroy the root of war. And that is, the exclusive desire for the well-being of one's own people; it is patriotism. Therefore, to destroy war, destroy patriotism. But to destroy patriotism, it is first necessary to produce conviction that it is an evil; and that is difficult to do. Tell people that war is an evil, and they will laugh; for who does not know it? Tell them that patriotism is an evil, and most of them will agree, but with a reservation. "Yes," they will say, "wrong patriotism is an evil; but there is another kind, the kind we hold." But just what this good patriotism is, no one explains. If good patriotism consists in inaggressiveness, as many say, still all patriotism, even if not aggressive, is necessarily retentive; that is, people wish to keep what they have previously conquered. The nation does not exist which was founded without conquest; and conquest can only be retained by the means which achieved it — namely, violence, murder. But if patriotism be not even retentive, it is then the restoring patriotism of conquered and oppressed nations, of Armenians, Poles, Czechs, Irish, and so on. And this patriotism is about the very worst; for it is the most embittered and the most provocative of violence.

Patriotism cannot be good. Why do not people say that egoism may be good? For this might more easily be maintained as to egoism, which is a natural and inborn feeling, than as to patriotism, which is an unnatural feeling, artificially grafted on man.

It will be said, "Patriotism has welded mankind into states, and maintains the unity of states." But men are now united in states; that work is done; why now

maintain exclusive devotion to one's own state, when this produces terrible evils for all states and nations? For this same patriotism which welded mankind into states is now destroying those same states. If there were but one patriotism — say of the English only — then it were possible to regard that as conciliatory, or beneficent. But when, as now, there is American patriotism, English, German, French, Russian, all opposed to one another, in this event, patriotism no longer unites, but disunites. To say that patriotism was beneficent, unifying the states, when it flourished in Greece and Rome, and that it is also similarly and equally beneficent now, after eighteen centuries of life under Christianity, is as much as to say that, because plowing was useful and good for the field before the sowing, it is equally so now, when the crop has come up.

It might, indeed, be well to let patriotism survive, in memory of the benefits it once brought, in the way we have preserved ancient monuments, like temples, tombs, and so on. But temples and tombs endure without causing any harm; while patriotism ceases not to inflict incalculable woes.

Why are Armenians and Turks now agitated, being massacred, becoming like wild beasts? Why are England and Russia, each anxious for its own share of the inheritance from Turkey, waiting upon, and not ending, these butcheries of Armenians? Why are Abyssinians and Italians being massacred? Why was a terrible war within an ace of outbreak over Venezuela; and since, another over the Transvaal? And the Chino-Japanese war, the Russo-Turkish, the Franco-German? And the bitterness of conquered nations: Armenians, Poles, Irish? And the preparations for a war of all nations? All this is the fruit of patriotism. Seas of blood have been shed over this passion; and will yet be shed for it, unless people free themselves of this obsolete relic of antiquity.

Several times now I have had occasion to write about patriotism; about its entire incompatibility, not only with the truly understood teaching of Christ, but with the very lowest demands of morality in a Christian

society. Each time my arguments have been met either with silence, or with a lofty suggestion that my ideas, as expressed, are Utopian utterances of mysticism, anarchism, and cosmopolitanism. Often my ideas are summed up, and then, instead of counter-arguments, the remark only is added, that "this is nothing less than cosmopolitanism!" As if this word, cosmopolitanism, had indisputably refuted all my arguments.

Men who are serious, mature, clever, kind, and who — this is the most important matter — stand like a city on a mountain top; men who by their example involuntarily lead the masses; such men assume that the legitimacy and beneficence of patriotism are so far evident and certain, that it is not worth while answering the frivolous and foolish attacks on the sacred feeling. And the majority of people, misled from childhood, and infected with patriotism, accept this lofty silence as the most convincing argument; and they continue to walk in the darkness of ignorance.

Those who, from their position, can help to free the masses from their sufferings, and do not do so, commit a vast sin.

The most fearful evil in the world is hypocrisy. Not in vain did Christ, once only, show anger; and that against the hypocrisy of the Pharisees.

But what was the Pharisaic hypocrisy compared with the hypocrisy of our own time? In comparison with our hypocrites, those among the Pharisees were the justest of men; and their art of hypocrisy was child's play, beside ours. It cannot be otherwise. All our lives, with their profession of Christianity, of the doctrine of humility and love, lived in an armed robber camp, cannot be other than one unbroken, frightful hypocrisy. It is very convenient to profess a doctrine which has, at one end, Christian holiness and consequent infallibility, and at the other end, the heathen sword and gallows; so that, when it is possible to deceive and impose by holiness, holiness is brought in play, while, when the deceit fails, the sword and gallows are set to work. Such a doctrine is very con-

venient. But a time comes when the cobweb of lies gives way, and it is no longer possible to keep up both ends; one or other has to go. This is about to happen with the doctrine of patriotism.

Whether people wish it or do not wish it, the question stands clear to mankind, *How can this patriotism, whence come human sufferings incalculable, sufferings both physical and moral, be necessary, and be a virtue?* This question, of compulsion, must be answered.

It is needful, either to show that patriotism is so beneficent that it redeems all those terrible sufferings which it causes to mankind; or else, to acknowledge that patriotism is an evil, which, instead of being grafted upon and suggested to people, should be struggled against with all one's might, to escape from it.

C'est à prendre ou à laisser, as the French say. If patriotism be good, then Christianity, as giving peace, is an idle dream, and the sooner we root it out, the better. But if Christianity really gives peace, and if we really want peace, then patriotism is a survival of barbarism, and it is not only wrong to excite and develop it, as we do now, but it ought to be rooted out by every means, by preaching, persuasion, contempt, ridicule. If Christianity be truth, and we wish to live in peace, then must we more than cease to take pleasure in the power of our country; we must rejoice in the weakening of that power, and help thereto.

A Russian should rejoice if Poland, the Baltic Provinces, Finland, Armenia, should be separated, freed, from Russia; so with an Englishman in regard to Ireland, India, and other possessions; and each should help to this, because, the greater the state, the more wrong and cruel is its patriotism, and the greater is the sum of suffering upon which its power is founded. Therefore, if we really wish to be what we profess to be, we must not only cease our present desire for the growth of our state, but we must desire its decrease, its weakening, and help this forward with all our might. And in this way we must train the rising generation; we must educate them so that, just as

now a young man is ashamed to show his rude egoism by eating everything and leaving nothing for others, by pushing the weak out of the way that he may pass himself, by forcibly taking that which another needs: so he may then be equally ashamed of desiring increased power for his own country; and so that, just as it is now considered stupid, foolish, to praise oneself, it shall then be seen to be equally foolish to praise one's own nation, as it is now done in divers of the best national histories, pictures, monuments, text-books, articles, verses, sermons, and silly national hymns. It must be understood that, as long as we praise patriotism, and cultivate it in the young, so long will there be armaments to destroy the physical and spiritual life of nations; and wars, vast, awful wars, such as we are preparing for, and into the circle of which we are drawing, debauching them in our patriotism, the new and to be dreaded combatants of the far East.

The Emperor Wilhelm, one of the most absurd personages of our time, — orator, poet, musician, dramatist, and painter, chief of all, patriot, — lately had made a sketch representing all the nations of Europe, standing, with drawn swords, on the sea-shore; there, under direction of the Archangel Michael, gazing at figures of Buddha and Confucius, seated in the distance. In Wilhelm's intention, this denotes that the nations of Europe must unite, to oppose the danger moving upon them from the quarter shown. And he is perfectly right; that is, from his pagan, gross, patriotic point of view, obsolete these eighteen hundred years.

The European nations, forgetful of Christ for the sake of patriotism, have ever more and more excited and incited these peaceful peoples to patriotism; and now have roused them to such a degree that really, if only Japan and China as completely forget the teaching of Buddha and Confucius as we have forgotten the teaching of Christ, they would soon master the art of killing (soon learned, as Japan has shown); and being brave, skilful, strong, and numerous, they would inevitably do with Europe what the European countries are

doing with Africa; unless Europe can oppose to them something stronger than armaments and Edisonian devices. "The disciple is not above his master: but every one that is perfect shall be as his master."

To the question of a petty king, as to how many men, and in what way, he should add to his troops, in order to conquer a southern tribe which refused submission to him, Confucius replied, "Disband all your army, use what you now spend on troops for the education of your people, and for the improvement of agriculture; and the southern tribe will expel its king, and, without war, submit to thy authority."

Thus taught Confucius, whom we are counseled to fear.

And we, having forgotten the teaching of Christ, having renounced him, wish to subdue nations by violence; thereby only to prepare for ourselves new enemies, still more powerful than our present neighbors.

A friend of mine, having seen Wilhelm's picture, said: "The picture is excellent, only it does not at all signify what is written below. It really shows the Archangel Michael pointing out to all the governments of Europe, represented as brigands hung round with arms, that which is to destroy, annihilate them; namely, the meekness of Buddha and the reasonableness of Confucius." He might have added, "and the humility of Lao-Tse." And indeed we, in our hypocrisy, have so far forgotten Christ, and corroded out of our lives all that is Christian, that the teachings of Buddha and Confucius rise incomparably higher than that bestial patriotism which guides our pseudo-Christian nations.

The salvation of Europe, of the whole Christian world, comes not by being girt with swords, like brigands, as in Wilhelm's picture; not by rushing across seas to kill our brethren: but, oppositely, by casting off that survival of barbarism, patriotism; and having renounced it, by disarming; showing the Oriental nations an example, not of savage patriotism and ferocity, but that one of brotherly life which has been taught to us by Christ.

LETTER ON THE PEACE CONFERENCE

THE opinion expressed in your estimable letter, that the easiest and surest way to universal disarmament is by individuals refusing to take part in military service, is most just. I am even of opinion that this is the only way to escape from the terrible and ever increasing miseries of wardom (militarism). But your opinion that at the Conference which is about to assemble at the Tsar's invitation, the question should be debated whether men who refuse military service may not be employed on public works instead, appears to me quite mistaken — in the first place, because the Conference itself can be nothing but one of those hypocritical arrangements which aim not at peace, but, on the contrary, at hiding from men the one means of obtaining universal peace, which the most advanced men begin to discern.

The Conference, it is said, will aim, if not at disarmament, then at checking the increase of armaments. It is supposed that at this Conference the representatives of governments will agree to cease increasing their forces. If so, the question involuntarily presents itself: How will the governments of those countries act which at the time of this meeting happen to be weaker than their neighbors? Such governments will hardly agree to remain in that condition — weaker than their neighbors. Or, if they have such firm belief in the validity of the stipulations made by the Conference as to agree to remain weaker, why should they not be weaker still? Why spend money on an army at all?

If, again, the business of the Conference will be to equalize the fighting forces of the various states, and

to keep them stationary, then, even could such an impossible balance be arrived at, the question involuntarily arises: Why need the governments stop at such armaments as now exist? Why not decrease them? Why need Germany, France, and Russia have, say, for instance, 1,000,000 men each, and not 500,000, or why not 10,000 each, or why not 1000 each? If diminution is possible, why not reduce to a minimum? And, finally, why not, instead of armies, have champions — David and Goliath — and settle international questions according to the results of their combats?

It is said that the conflicts between governments are to be decided by arbitration. But, apart from the fact that the disputes will be settled, not by representatives of the people, but by representatives of the governments, and that there is no guarantee that the decisions will be just ones, who is to carry out the decisions of the court? The army? Whose army? That of all the Powers? But the strength of those armies is unequal. Who, for instance, on the Continent is to carry out a decision which is disadvantageous, say, for Germany, Russia, and France allied together? Or who, at sea, will carry out a decision contrary to the interests of England, America, and France? The arbitrator's sentence against the military violence of states will be carried out by military violence — that is to say, the thing that has to be checked is to be the instrument by which it is to be checked. To catch a bird, put salt on its tail.

I recollect, during the siege of Sevastopol, sitting one day with the Adjutant Von Saken, commander of the garrison, when Prince S. S. Urusof, a very brave officer, a very eccentric man, and one of the best chess-players of that day in Europe, entered the room. He said he wished to see the general. One of the adjutants took him to the general's cabinet. Ten minutes later Urusof passed out again, looking discontented. The adjutant who had accompanied him returned to us and recounted, laughing, on what business Urusof had come to Von Saken. He had proposed to challenge the English to

play a game of chess for the possession of the advanced trench of the fifth bastion, which had been lost and regained several times, and had already cost some hundreds of lives.

Undoubtedly it would have been far better to play chess for the trench than to kill people. But Von Saken did not agree to Urusof's proposal, for he knew well that it would be useless to play at chess for the trench unless both sides trusted each other implicitly, and knew that what was agreed upon would be carried out. But the presence of the soldiers before the trench, and the cannon pointed at it, were signs that no such mutual confidence existed. While there were armies on both sides it was clear that the matter would be decided, not by chess, but by charges. And the same consideration applies to international questions. For them to be decided by courts of arbitration there must be, among the Powers, full mutual confidence that the decisions of the court will be respected. If there is such confidence, no armies are necessary. But if armies exist, it is obvious that this confidence is lacking, and that international questions can be decided only by the strength of the armies. As long as armies exist they are necessary, not only for acquiring fresh territories, as all the states are now doing, in Asia, in Africa, or in Europe, but also in order to maintain by force what has been obtained by force.

Obtaining or retaining by force can be done only by conquering. And it is always *les gros bataillons* which conquer. And, therefore, if a government has an army, it should have as large a one as possible. That is its business. If a government does not do that, it is unnecessary. A government may undertake many things in internal affairs; it may emancipate, civilize, enrich a people, build roads and canals, colonize waste lands, or organize public works, but there is one thing it cannot do, — viz., the very thing which this Conference is summoned to do, *i.e.* reduce its fighting force.

But if, as appeared from the explanations that followed the manifesto, it will be an aim of the Conference to

prohibit implements of destruction which seem particularly cruel (and why, while they are about it, not try to prohibit the seizure of letters, the falsification of telegrams, the spy system, and all the terrible meannesses which form an integral part of military defense?), such prohibition to use in strife all the means that exist is just as impracticable as it is to forbid people fighting for their lives to strike the most sensitive parts of the body. And why is a wound, or death, from an explosive bullet worse than a wound from the most ordinary bullet or splinter, inflicted on a very tender part? The suffering in that case also reaches the utmost limit, and is followed by just the same death as results from any other weapon.

It is amazing that sane adults can seriously express such queer ideas. No doubt diplomatists, who devote their lives to lying, are so accustomed to that vice, and live and act in so dense an atmosphere of lies, that they themselves do not see all the absurdity and mendacity of their proposals. But how can honest private people (not such as curry favor with the Tsar, by extolling his ridiculous proposals) — how is it that they do not see that the result of this Conference can be nothing but the strengthening of the deception in which governments keep their subjects, as was the case with Alexander the First's "Holy Alliance"?

The aim of the Conference will be, not to establish peace, but to hide from men the sole means of escape from the miseries of war, which lies in the refusal by private individuals of all participation in the murders of war. And, therefore, the Conference can on no account accept for discussion the question suggested.

With those who refuse military service on conscientious grounds, governments will always behave as the Russian government behaved with the Dukhobors. At the very time when it was professing to the whole world its peaceful intentions, it was (with every effort to keep the matter secret) torturing and ruining and banishing the most peaceable people in Russia, merely because they were peaceable, not in words only, but in deeds, and therefore refused to be soldiers. All the European

governments have met, and still meet, refusals of military service in the same way, though less brutally. That is how the governments of Austria, Germany, France, Sweden, Switzerland, and Holland have acted, and are still acting, and they cannot act otherwise.

They cannot act otherwise because they govern their own subjects by force — *i.e.* by means of a disciplined army — and can, therefore, on no account leave the reduction of that force (and consequently of their own power) to the casual inclination of private people, especially because nobody likes to kill or to be killed; and should they tolerate such refusals, the great majority of people probably would prefer to do other work instead of being soldiers. So that, as soon as people were permitted to refuse army service, and do work instead, there would soon be so many laborers that there would not be soldiers enough to make the workers work.

Liberals entangled in their much talking, socialists, and other so-called advanced people may think that their speeches in Parliament and at meetings, their unions, strikes, and pamphlets, are of great importance; while the refusals of military service by private individuals are unimportant occurrences not worthy of attention. The governments, however, know very well what is important to them and what is not. And the governments readily allow all sorts of liberal and radical speeches in Reichstags, as well as workmen's associations and socialist demonstrations, and they even pretend themselves to sympathize with these things, knowing that they are of great use to them in diverting people's attention from the great and only means of emancipation. But governments never openly tolerate refusals of military service, or refusals of war taxes, which are the same thing, because they know that such refusals expose the fraud of governments and strike at the root of their power.

As long as governments continue to rule their people by force, and continue to desire, as now, to obtain new possessions (Philippines, Port Arthur, etc.), and to retain what they already possess (Poland, Alsace, India, Algeria, etc.), so long will they not voluntarily decrease their

armies, but will, on the contrary, continue to increase them.

It was recently reported that an American regiment refused to go to Iloilo. This news was given as something astonishing. But the really astonishing thing is that such things do not occur continually. How could all those Russians, Germans, Frenchmen, Italians, and Americans who have fought in recent times, set off to kill men of another country at the whim of strangers, whom in most cases they did not respect, and submit themselves to suffering and death?

It seems plain and natural that all these men should recollect themselves, if not when they are enlisted as soldiers, then at the last moment when they are being led against the enemy, and should stop, fling away their weapons, and call to their opponents to do the same.

It seems so plain and natural that every one should do this, and if they do not do so it is only because they believe in the governments that assure them that all the burdens people bear for war are laid upon them for their own good. With amazing effrontery, all governments have always declared, and still go on declaring, that all the preparations for war, and even the very wars themselves, that they undertake, are necessary to preserve peace. In this sphere of hypocrisy and deception a fresh step is being made now, consisting in this: That the very governments for whose support the armies and the wars are essential pretend that they are concerned to discover means to diminish the armies and to abolish war. The governments wish to persuade the peoples that there is no need for private individuals to trouble about freeing themselves from wars; the governments themselves, at their conferences, will arrange first to reduce and presently quite to abolish armies. But this is — untrue.

Armies can be reduced and abolished only in opposition to the will, but never by the will, of governments.

Armies will only be diminished and abolished when people cease to trust governments, and themselves seek salvation from the miseries that oppress them, and seek

that safety, not by the complicated and delicate combinations of diplomatists, but in the simple fulfilment of that law, binding upon every man, inscribed in all religous teachings, and present in every heart, not to do to others what you wish them not to do to you — above all, not to slay your neighbors.

Armies will first diminish, and then disappear, only when public opinion brands with contempt those who, whether from fear, or for advantage, sell their liberty and enter the ranks of those murderers, called soldiers; and when the men now ignored and even blamed — who, in despite of all the persecution and suffering they have borne — have refused to yield the control of their actions into the hands of others, and become the tools of murder — are recognized by public opinion, to be the foremost champions and benefactors of mankind. Only then will armies first diminish and then quite disappear, and a new era in the life of mankind will commence. And that time is near.

And that is why I think that your opinion that the refusals to serve in the army are facts of immense importance, and that they will emancipate mankind from the miseries of war, is perfectly just. But your opinion that the Conference may conduce toward this is quite an error. The Conference can only divert people's eyes from the sole path leading to safety and liberty.[1]

[1] A number of Swedish gentlemen addressed a letter to Tolstoĭ concerning the Tsar's Peace Conference, in reply to which he wrote them a letter.

Tolstoĭ is always most careful in the arrangement of the thoughts he puts before the world. His works are written over and over again before they are published. On this occasion, after he had despatched the letter, he felt that the manner in which he had expressed his opinion was not satisfactory. Eventually he rewrote the article, in such a way that the whole letter was recast in a fresh form, and hardly a paragraph of the original remained unaltered. — Tr.

LETTER TO A NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICER

YOU are surprised that soldiers are taught that it is right to kill people in certain cases and in war, while in the books admitted to be holy by those who so teach, there is nothing like such a permission, but, on the contrary, not only is all murder forbidden, but all insulting of others is forbidden also, and we are told not to do to others what we do not wish done to us. And you ask, is not this a fraud? And if it is a fraud, then for whose sake is it done?

Yes, it is a fraud, committed for the sake of those accustomed to live on the sweat and blood of other men, and who have therefore perverted, and still pervert, Christ's teaching, which was given to man for his good, but which has now, in its perverted form, become the chief source of human misery.

The thing has come about in this way:—

The government, and all those people of the upper classes that are near the government, and that live by the work of others, need some means of dominating the workers, and this means they find in their control of the army. Defence against foreign enemies is only an excuse. The German government frightens its subjects about the Russians and the French, the French government frightens its people about the Germans, the Russian government frightens its people about the French and the Germans, and that is the way with all governments. But neither the Germans, nor the Russians, nor the French, desire to fight their neighbors and other people; but, living in peace, they dread war more than anything else in the world. The government and the

upper governing classes, to excuse their domination of the laborers, behave like a gipsy who whips his horse before he turns a corner and then pretends he cannot hold it in. They provoke their own people and some foreign government, and then pretend that for the well-being or for the defense of their people they must declare war, which again brings profit only to generals, officers, functionaries, merchants, and, in general, to the rich. In reality war is an inevitable result of the existence of armies; and armies are only needed by governments in order to dominate their own working-classes.

The thing is a crime, but the worst of it is that the government, in order to have a plausible basis for its domination of the people, has to pretend that it holds the highest religious teaching known to man (*i.e.* the Christian), and that it brings up its subjects in this teaching. That teaching, however, is in its nature opposed not only to murder, but to all violence, and, therefore, the governments, in order to dominate the people and to be considered Christian, had to pervert Christianity and to hide its true meaning from the people, and thus deprive men of the well-being Christ brought them.

This perversion was accomplished long ago, in the time of that scoundrel the Emperor Constantine, who for doing it was enrolled among the saints.[1] All subsequent governments, especially our Russian government, do their utmost to preserve this perverted understanding, and not to allow the people to see the real meaning of Christianity; because, having seen the real meaning of Christianity, the people would perceive that the governments, with their taxes, soldiers, prisons, gallows, and false priests, are not only not the pillars of Christianity they profess to be, but are its greatest enemies.

In consequence of this perversion those frauds which have surprised you are possible, and all those terrible misfortunes occur from which people suffer.

The people are oppressed, robbed, poor, ignorant, dying of hunger. Why? Because the land is in the

[1] Constantine the Great was decreed to be a god by the Roman Senate, and was made a Christian saint by the Eastern Church. — Tr.

hands of the rich; the people are enslaved in mills and in factories, obliged to earn money because taxes are demanded from them, and the price of their labor is diminished while the price of things they need is increased.

How are they to escape? By taking the land from the rich? But if this is done, soldiers will come and will kill the rebels or put them in prison. Take the mills and factories? The same will happen. Organize and support a strike? But it is sure to fail. The rich will hold out longer than the workers, and the armies are always on the side of the capitalists. The people will never extricate themselves from the want in which they are kept, as long as the army is in the hands of the governing classes.

But who compose these armies that keep the people in this state of slavery? Who are these soldiers that will fire at the peasants who take the land, or at the strikers who will not disperse, and at the smugglers who bring in goods without paying taxes, that put in prison and there guard those who refuse to pay taxes? The soldiers are these same peasants who are deprived of land, these same strikers who want better wages, these same taxpayers who want to be rid of these taxes.

And why do these people shoot at their brothers? Because it has been instilled into them that the oath they were obliged to take on entering the service is binding, and that, though it is generally wrong to murder people, it is right to do so at the command of their superiors. That is to say that that fraud is played off upon them which has occurred to you. But here we meet the question: How is it that sensible people — often people who can read, and even educated people — believe in such an evident lie? However little education a man may have, he cannot but know that Christ did not sanction murder, but taught kindness, meekness, forgiveness of injuries, love of one's enemies, — and therefore he cannot help seeing that on the basis of Christian teaching he cannot pledge himself in advance to kill all whom he may be ordered to kill.

The question is: How can sensible people believe, as all now serving in the army have believed and still believe, such an evident fraud? The answer is that it is not this one fraud by itself that takes people in, but they have from childhood been deprived of the proper use of their reason by a whole series of frauds, a whole system of frauds, called the Orthodox Faith, which is nothing but the grossest idolatry. In this faith people are taught that God is triple, that besides this triple God there is a Queen of Heaven,[1] and besides this queen there are various saints whose corpses have not decayed,[2] and besides these saints there are ikons[3] of the Gods and of the Queen of Heaven, to which one should offer candles and pray with one's hands; and that the most important and holy thing on earth is the pap,[4] which the parson makes of wine and white bread on Sundays behind a railing; and that after the parson has whispered over it, the wine is no longer wine, and the white bread is not bread, but they are the blood and flesh of one of the triple Gods, etc.

All this is so stupid and senseless that it is quite impossible to understand what it all means. And the very people who teach this faith do not tell you to understand it, but only tell you to believe it; and people trained to it from childhood can believe any kind of nonsense that is told

[1] The Holy Virgin, the "Mother of God," and "Queen of Heaven," plays a prominent part in the Orthodox Eastern Church, *i.e.* the Russo-Greek Church. — Tr.

[2] One proof of holiness adduced as justifying admission to the rank of sainthood is the non-decomposition of the holy person's corpse. These miraculously preserved bodies are enshrined in chapels, monasteries, and cathedrals, and are there visited by pilgrims who offer up prayers at the shrine, place candles before it, and usually leave some contribution for the benefit of the establishment. The inspection allowed is not very close, and there are stories of people being employed to stuff the saints with straw. These tales are, however, considered irreligious. — Tr.

[3] The *ikons* of the Eastern Church are not "graven images," but are pictures painted in a conventional cadaverous manner on wood; these are often covered with an embossed metal cover allowing only the hands and face to be seen, and making the ikon as much like an image as a picture. — Tr.

[4] "The pap" is the author's irreverent way of referring to the mixture of bread and wine administered by the priests of the Orthodox Eastern Church at the celebration of the Holy Eucharist. — Tr.

them. And when men have been so befooled that they believe that God hangs in the corner,[1] or sits in a morsel of pap which the parson gives out in a spoon; that to kiss a board or some relics, and to put candles in front of them, is useful for life here and hereafter, — they are called on to enter the military service, where they are humbugged to any extent, being made to swear on the Gospels (in which swearing is prohibited) that they will do just what is forbidden in those Gospels, and then taught that to kill people at the word of those in command is not a sin, but that to refuse to submit to those in command is a sin. So that the fraud played off on soldiers, when it is instilled into them that they may without sin kill people at the wish of those in command, is not an isolated fraud, but is bound up with a whole system of fraud, without which this one fraud would not deceive them.

Only a man who is quite befooled by the false faith called Orthodoxy, palmed off upon him for the true Christian faith, can believe that there is no sin in a Christian entering the army, promising blindly to obey any man who ranks above him in the service, and, at the will of others, learning to kill, and committing that most terrible crime, forbidden by all laws.

A man free from the pseudo-Christian faith called Orthodox will not believe that.

And that is why the so-called Sectarians — *i.e.* Christians who have repudiated the Orthodox teaching and acknowledge Christ's teaching as explained in the Gospels, and especially in the Sermon on the Mount — are not tricked by this deception, but have frequently refused, and still do refuse, to be soldiers, considering such occupation incompatible with Christianity and preferring to bear all kinds of persecution, as hundreds and thousands of people are doing; in Russia among the Dukhobors and Molokans, in Austria the Nazarenes, and in

[1] This refers to the common practice of hanging an ikon in the corner of each dwelling-room. These ikons are called "Gods," and are prayed to in a way that among common and devout people often amounts to idolatry. — Tr.

Sweden, Switzerland, and Germany among members of the Evangelical sects. The government knows this, and is therefore exceedingly anxious that the general Church fraud, without which its power could not be maintained, should be commenced with every child from early infancy, and should be continually maintained in such a way that none may avoid it. The government tolerates anything else, drunkenness and vice (and not only tolerates, but even organizes drunkenness and vice — they help to stupefy people), but by all the means in its power it hinders those who have escaped from its trap from assisting others to escape.

The Russian government perpetrates this fraud with special craft and cruelty. It orders all its subjects to baptize their children during infancy into the false faith called Orthodoxy, and it threatens to punish them if they disobey. And when the children are baptized, *i.e.* are reckoned as Orthodox, then under threats of criminal penalties they are forbidden to discuss the faith into which, without their wish, they were baptized; and for such discussion of that faith, as well as for renouncing it and passing to another, they are actually punished. So that about all Russians it cannot be said that they believe the Orthodox faith, — they do not know whether they believe it or not, but were converted to it during infancy and kept in it by violence, *i.e.* by the fear of punishment. All Russians were entrapped into Orthodoxy by a cunning fraud, and are kept in it by cruel force. Using the power it wields, the government perpetrates and maintains this fraud, and the fraud upholds its power.

And, therefore, the only means to free people from their many miseries lies in freeing them from the false faith instilled in them by government, and in their imbibing the true Christian teaching which is hidden by this false teaching. The true Christian teaching is very simple, clear, and obvious to all, as Christ said. But it is simple and accessible only when man is freed from that falsehood in which we were all educated, and which is passed off upon us as God's truth.

Nothing needful can be poured into a vessel full of what is useless. We must first empty out what is useless. So it is with the acquirement of true Christian teaching. We have first to understand that all the stories telling how God six thousand years ago made the world; how Adam sinned and the human race fell; and how the Son of God, a God born of a virgin, came on earth and redeemed man; and all the fables in the Old Testament and in the Gospels, and all the lives of the saints with their stories of miracles and relics, — are nothing but a gross hash of Jewish superstitions and priestly frauds. Only to a man quite free from this deception can the clear and simple teaching of Christ, which needs no explanation, be accessible and comprehensible. That teaching tells us nothing of the beginning, or of the end, of the world, or about God and His purpose, or in general about things which we cannot, and need not, know; but it speaks only of what man must do to save himself, *i.e.* how best to live the life he has come into, in this world, from birth to death. For this purpose it is only necessary to act to others as we wish them to act to us. In that is all the law and the prophets, as Christ said. And to act in that way we need neither ikons, nor relics, nor church services, nor priests, nor catechisms, nor governments, but on the contrary, we need perfect freedom from all that; for to do to others as we wish them to do to us is only possible when a man is free from the fables which the priests give out as the only truth, and is not bound by promises to act as other people may order. Only such a man will be capable of fulfilling — not his own will nor that of other men — but the will of God.

And the will of God is not that we should fight and oppress the weak, but that we should acknowledge all men to be our brothers and should serve one another.

These are the thoughts your letter has aroused in me. I shall be very glad if they help to clear up the questions you are thinking about.

LETTER TO DR. EUGEN HEINRICH SCHMITT[1]

YOU write to me that people seem quite unable to understand that to serve the government is incompatible with Christianity.

In just the same way people were long unable to see that indulgences, inquisitions, slavery, and tortures were incompatible with Christianity. But a time came when it was comprehensible; and a time will come when men will understand the incompatibility with Christianity, first of war service (that already is beginning to be felt), and then of service to government in general.

It is now fifty years since a not widely known, but very remarkable, American writer — Thoreau — not only clearly expressed that incompatibility in his admirable essay on "Civil Disobedience," but gave a practical example of such disobedience. Not wishing to be an accomplice or supporter of a government which legalized slavery, he declined to pay a tax demanded of him, and went to prison for it.

Thoreau refused to pay taxes to government, and evidently the same motives as actuated him would prevent men from serving a government. As, in your letter to the minister, you have admirably expressed it: you do not consider it compatible with your moral dignity to work for an institution which represents legalized murder and robbery.

Thoreau was, I think, the first to express this view. People paid scant attention to either his refusal or his article fifty years ago — the thing seemed so strange.

[1] Editor of *Ohne Staat*, Budapest.

It was put down to his eccentricity. To-day your refusal attracts some attention, and, as is always the case when new truth is clearly expressed, it evokes a double surprise — first, surprise that a man should say such queer things, and then, surprise that I had not myself discovered what this man is saying; it is so certain and so obvious.

Such a truth as that a Christian must not be a soldier — *i.e.* a murderer — and must not be the servant of an institution maintained by violence and murder, is so certain, so clear and irrefutable, that to enable people to grasp it, discussion, proof, or eloquence are not necessary. For the majority of men to hear and understand this truth, it is only needful that it should be constantly repeated.

The truth that a Christian should not take part in murdering, or serve the chiefs of the murderers for a salary collected from the poor by force, is so plain and indisputable that those who hear it cannot but agree with it. And if a man continues to act contrary to these truths after hearing them, it is only because he is accustomed to act contrary to them, and it is difficult to break the habit. Moreover, as long as most people act as he does, he will not, by acting contrary to the truth, lose the regard of the majority of those who are most respected.

The case is the same as it is with the question of vegetarianism. "A man can live and be healthy without killing animals for food; therefore, if he eats meat, he participates in taking animal life merely for the sake of his appetite. And to act so is immoral." It is so simple and indubitable that it is impossible not to agree with it. But because most people do eat meat, people, on hearing the case stated, admit its justice, and then, laughing, say: "But a good beefsteak is a good thing all the same; and I shall eat one at dinner to-day with pleasure."

Just in the same way officers in the army, and officials employed in the civil service, treat statements of the incompatibility of Christianity and humanitarianism with

military and civil service. "Yes, of course, it's true," says such a man, "but, all the same, it is nice to wear a uniform and epaulets, which serve as an introduction anywhere, and which people respect; and it is still better to know that, whatever happens, your salary will be paid punctually and accurately on the first of each month. So that though your statement of the case is correct, I am nevertheless bent on getting a rise of salary and securing a pension."

The position is admitted to be indubitable; but, in the first place, one need not oneself kill an ox to get beefsteaks. It has already been killed. And one need not oneself collect taxes or murder. The taxes are already collected, and the army already exists. And, secondly, most people have not yet heard this view of things, and do not know that it is wrong to do these things. So that, for the present, one need not refuse a well-cooked beefsteak, or a uniform, and all its advantages, or medals and orders; or, above all, a secure monthly salary; "and as for the future, we shall see when the time comes."

At the root of the matter lies the fact that people have not yet heard the injustice and wickedness of such a way of life stated. And, therefore, it is necessary continually to repeat "Carthago delenda est,"[1] and Carthage will certainly fall.

I do not say that government and its power will be destroyed. It will not fall to pieces quickly; there are still too many gross elements among the people to support it. But the Christian support of government will be destroyed — *i.e.* those who do violence will cease to find support for their authority in the sanctity of Christianity. Those who employ violence will be simply violators, and nothing else. And when that is so — when they can no longer cloak themselves with pseudo-Christianity — then the end of all violence will be near.

[1] Cato the Elder was so impressed with the necessity of refusing all compromise with the Carthaginians, that for many years he ended every speech he made in the Senate with the words, "Carthage must be destroyed." — TR.

Let us seek to hasten that end. "Carthago delenda est." Government is violence, Christianity is meekness, non-resistance, love. And, therefore, government cannot be Christian, and a man who wishes to be a Christian must not serve government. Government cannot be Christian. A Christian cannot serve government. Government cannot .... and so on.

It is curious that just when you wrote to me about the incapability of governmental activity with Christianity, I was writing a long letter[1] on the same theme to a lady acquaintance. I send you a copy of that letter. You are at liberty to publish it if you wish to do so.[2]

[1] Published as "A Letter to the Liberals" (p. 197 *supra*).

[2] Writing to a man who shared his views on no-government and non-resistance, Tolstoĭ, in this letter to Dr. Schmitt, expresses himself briefly, without reiterating arguments already familiar to his correspondent.— Ed.

A REPLY TO CRITICISMS

[The following letter was addressed by Count Tolstoï to a Polish journalist, in September, 1895.]

I RECEIVED your letter, and hastened to read your article in *The Northern Messenger*. I am much obliged to you for drawing my attention to this. The article is excellent, and I have learned from it much that was new and joyful to me. I knew about Micskiewicz and Tovianski. But I ascribed their religious direction to the exceptional dispositions of these two individuals. From your article I learn that they are only the forerunners of a Christian movement, deeply touching in its nobility and sincerity, which has been called forth by patriotism, and which still endures.

My article, "Christianity and Patriotism," evoked very many objections. I received them from philosophers and journalists, Russian, French, German, and Austrian; and now from you. All the objections, yours among them, amount to this: That my condemnation of patriotism is justly applied to bad patriotism, but has no foundation as regards good and useful patriotism. But, as to what constitutes this latter, and how it is distinguishable from bad patriotism, no one has yet troubled to explain.

You say in your letter, that "as well as the militant, inhumane patriotism of strong nations, there is also the opposite patriotism of enslaved nations, who seek only to defend their native faith and language against the enemy." You thus identify good patriotism as the patriotism of the oppressed. But the oppression or the dominance of nations makes no essential difference in what is called patriotism. Fire is always the same

burning and dangerous fire, whether it blaze up in a bonfire or flicker in a match.

By "patriotism" is really meant a love for one's own nation above other nations; just as by "egoism" is meant a love for oneself more than for others. It is hard to imagine how such preference for one nation above others can be deemed a good, and therefore a desirable, disposition. If you say that patriotism is more pardonable in the oppressed than in the oppressor, just as a manifestation of egoism is more pardonable in a man who is being strangled than in one who is left in peace, then it is impossible to disagree with you; nevertheless, patriotism cannot change its nature, whether it is displayed in oppressor or oppressed. This disposition of preference for one nation over all others, like egoism, can in nowise be good.

But not only is patriotism a bad disposition, it is unreasonable in principle.

By patriotism is meant, not only spontaneous, instinctive love for one's own nation, and preference for it above all other nations, but also the belief that such love and preference are good and useful. This belief is especially unreasonable in Christian nations.

It is unreasonable, not only because it runs counter to the first principles of Christ's teachings, but also because Christianity gains, by its own method, everything for which patriotism seeks; thus making patriotism superfluous, unnecessary, and a hindrance, like a lamp by daylight.

A man who, like Krasinski, believes that "the Church of God is not in this or that place, this or that rite, but in the whole planet, and in all the relations which can exist between individuals and nations" — such a man can no longer be a patriot; but he will, in the name of Christianity, do all that patriotism can demand of him. For example, patriotism demands of its votary the devotion of his life for the sake of his fellow-countrymen. But Christianity, demanding the same devotion for the good of all men, demands it all the more forcibly and naturally for those of one's own nation.

You write of the terrible acts of violence perpetrated by the savage, stupid, and cruel Russian authorities, directed against the belief and language of the Poles; and you exhibit these as providing a motive for patriotic action. But I do not see this. To feel indignation at these deeds, and to oppose them with all one's might, it is not necessary to be either a Pole or a patriot; to be a Christian is enough.

Upon this point I, for instance, who am not a Pole, will yet vie with any Pole in the degree of my abhorrence of, my indignation at, those savage and stupid measures which Russian government officials direct against the Poles. I will go as far also, in my desire to oppose those measures; and this, not because I care for Catholicism above other religions, or for the Polish language above other tongues, but because I strive to be a Christian. In like manner, for the abolition of such evils, whether in Poland, or Alsace, or Bohemia, we need the spread, not of patriotism, but of true Christianity.

Some may say, "We do not wish to accept Christianity, and we are therefore free to exalt patriotism." But when once men have acknowledged Christianity, or at least the perception of human equality and respect for human dignity which flow from Christianity, there is then no longer room for patriotism. What, again, most astonishes me in all this is, that the upholders of the patriotism of the oppressed do not see how harmful patriotism, however perfect and refined they may represent it to be, is to their own particular cause.

Those attacks upon language and religion in Poland, the Baltic provinces, Alsace, Bohemia, upon the Jews in Russia, in every place where such acts of violence occur — in what name have they been, and are they, perpetrated? In none other than the name of that patriotism which you defend.

Ask our savage Russifiers of Poland and the Baltic provinces, ask the persecutors of the Jews, why they act thus. They will tell you it is in defence of their native religion and language; they will tell you that if they do not act thus, their religion and language will

suffer — the Russians will be Polonized, Teutonized, Judaized.

Were there no doctrine that patriotism is beneficial, men of the end of the nineteenth century would never be found sunken so low as to determine upon the abominations they at present enact.

Now, learned men (our most savage religious persecutor is an ex-professor) find standing-ground upon patriotism. They know history, they know of all the fruitless horrors of persecution for the sake of language and religion; but, thanks to the doctrine of patriotism, they have a justification.

Patriotism gives them a standing-ground, which Christianity takes from under their feet. Therefore it behooves conquered nations, sufferers from oppression, to destroy patriotism, to destroy its doctrinal foundations, to ridicule it, and not to exalt it.

Defending patriotism, people go on to talk of the individuality of nations, of patriotism aiming to save the individuality of a nation; while the individuality of nations is assumed to be a necessary condition of progress.

But, to begin with, who says that such individuality is necessary to progress? This is in no way proved, and we have no right to take such an arbitrary assumption as an axiom. In the next place, even if it be accepted, even then, the way for a nation to assert its individuality is, not to struggle to do so, but, on the contrary, to forget about its individuality, and then to accomplish with all its power that which its people feel themselves most able, and therefore most called upon, to do. Just as an individual will most assert his individuality, not when he pays heed to it, but when, having forgotten about it, he, to the limit of his strength and capacity, does that to which his nature attracts him. So matters would be arranged among a people who, working for their support as a community, must choose different kinds of work and different places. Only let each one follow his strength and capacity in doing what is most necessary to the community, and do this as well as he

can, and all will inevitably work differently, with different tools and in different places.

One of the commonest sophisms used in defending immorality consists in wilfully confusing what is with what should be, and, having begun to speak of one thing, substituting another. This very sophism is employed above all in relation to patriotism. It is a fact, that to every Pole, the Pole is nearest and dearest; to the German, the German; to the Jew, the Jew; to the Russian, the Russian. It is even true that, through historical causes and bad education, the people of one nation instinctively feel aversion and ill-will to those of another. All this is so; but to admit it, like admitting the fact that each man loves himself more than he loves others, can in no way prove that it ought so to be. On the contrary, the whole concern of all humanity, and of every individual, lies in suppressing these preferences and aversions, in battling with them, and in deliberately behaving toward other nations and toward individual foreigners, exactly as toward one's own nation and fellow-countrymen.

To care for patriotism as an emotion worthy to be cultivated in every man is wholly superfluous. God, or nature, has already, without our care, so provided for this feeling that every man has it, leaving us no cause to trouble about cultivating it in ourselves and others. We must concern ourselves, not about patriotism, but to bring into life that light which is within us; to change the character of life, and approach it to the ideal which stands before us. That ideal, presented in our time before every man, and illumined with the true light from Christ, has not to do with the resuscitation of Poland, Bohemia, Ireland, Armenia; has not to do with the preservation of the unity and greatness of Russia, England, Germany, Austria; but, on the contrary, is concerned to destroy this unity and greatness of Russia, England, Germany, Austria, by the destruction of those force-maintained anti-Christian combinations called states, which stand in the way of all true progress, and occasion the sufferings of oppressed and

conquered nations; occasion all those evils from which contemporary humanity suffers. Such destruction is only possible through true enlightenment, resulting in the avowal that we, before being Russians, Poles, Germans, are men, the followers of one teacher, the children of one Father, brothers; and this the best representatives of the Polish nation understand, as you have so excellently shown in your article. Day by day this is understood by a greater and greater number of people throughout the whole world. So that the days of State violence are already numbered, and the liberation, not only of conquered nations, but of the crushed working-people, is by this time near, if only we ourselves will not delay the time of liberation, by sharing with deed and word in the violent measures of governments. The approval of patriotism of any kind as a good quality, and the incitement of the people to patriotism, are chief hindrances to the attainment of those ideals which rise before us.

Once more, I thank you very much for your letter, for the excellent article, and for the opportunity you have given me of again reconsidering, verifying, and expressing my ideas on patriotism.

REPLY TO CRITICS

A LETTER ADDRESSED TO "THE DAILY CHRONICLE"

SINCE the appearance of my book, "The Kingdom of God is within Us," and my article on "Patriotism and Christianity," I often hear and read in articles and letters addressed to me, arguments against, I will not say the ideas expressed in those books, but against such misconstructions as are put upon them. This is done sometimes consciously, but very often unwittingly, and is wholly due to a want of understanding of the spirit of the Christian religion.

"It is all very well," they say; "despotism, capital punishments, wars, the arming of all Europe, the precarious state of the working-classes, are indeed great evils, and you are right in condemning all this; but how can we do without government? What will you give instead of it? Being ourselves men, with a limited knowledge and intellect, have we the right, just because it seems best to us, to destroy that order of things which has helped our forefathers to attain the present state of civilization and its advantages? If you destroy the State, you must put something in its place. How can we run the risk of all the calamities which might ensue if government was abolished?"

But the fact is that the Christian doctrine, in its true sense, never proposed to abolish anything, nor to change any human organization. The very thing which distinguishes Christian religion from all other religions and social doctrines is that it gives men the possibilities of a real and good life, not by means of general laws regulating the lives of all men, but by enlightening each individual man with regard to the sense of his own life, by showing him wherein consists the

evil and the real good of his life. And the sense of life thus imparted to man by the Christian doctrine is so simple, so convincing, and leaves so little room for doubt, that if once man understands it, and, therefore, conceives wherein is the real good and the real evil of his life, he can never again consciously do what he considers to be the evil of his life, nor abstain from doing what he considers to be the real good of it, as surely as a plant cannot help turning toward light, and water cannot help running downward.

The sense of life, as shown by the Christian religion, consists in living so as to do the will of Him who sent us into life, from whom we are come, and to whom we shall return. The evil of our life consists in acting against this will, and the good in fulfilling it. And the rule given to us for the fulfilment of this will is so very plain and simple that it is impossible not to understand, or to misunderstand it.

If you cannot do unto others what you would that they should do to you, at least do not unto them what you would not that they should do unto you.

If you would not be made to work ten hours at a stretch in factories or in mines, if you would not have your children hungry, cold, and ignorant, if you would not be robbed of the land that feeds you, if you would not be shut up in prisons and sent to the gallows or hanged for committing an unlawful deed through passion or ignorance, if you would not suffer wounds nor be killed in war, — do not do this to others. All this is so simple and straightforward, and admits of so little doubt, that it is impossible for the simplest child not to understand, nor for the cleverest man to refute it. It is impossible to refute this law, especially because this law is given to us, not only by all the wisest men of the world, not only by the Man who is considered to be God by the majority of Christians, but because it is written in our minds and hearts.

Let us imagine a servant in his lord's power, appointed by his master to a task he loves and understands. If this man were to be addressed by men whom he knows

to be dependent on his master in the same way as he is, to whom similar tasks are set at which they will not work, and who would entreat him for his own good and for the good of other men to do what is directly opposed to his lord's plain commandments, what answer can any reasonable servant give to such entreaties? But this simile is far from fully expressing what a Christian must feel when he is called upon to take an active part in oppressing, robbing people of their land, in executing them, in waging war, and so on, all things which governments call upon us to do; for, however binding the commands of that master may have been to his servant, they can never be compared to that unquestionable knowledge which every man, as long as he is not corrupted by false doctrines, does possess, that he cannot and must not do unto others what he does not wish to be done unto him, and therefore cannot and must not take part in all things opposed to the rule of his Master, which are imposed upon him by governments.

Therefore the question for a Christian does not lie in this: whether or no a man has the right to destroy the existing order of things, and to establish another in its stead, or to decide which kind of government will be the best, as the question is sometimes purposely and very often unintentionally put by the enemies of Christianity (the Christian does not think about the general order of things, but leaves the guidance of them to God, for he firmly believes God has implanted His law in our minds and hearts, that there may be order, not disorder, and that nothing but good can arise from our following the unquestionable law of God, which has been so plainly manifested to us); but the question, the decision of which is not optional, but unavoidable, and which daily presents itself for a Christian to decide, is: How am I to act in the dilemma which is constantly before me? Shall I form part of a government which recognizes the right to own landed property by men who never work on it, which levies taxes on the poor in order to give them to the rich, which condemns erring men to gallows and death, which sends out soldiers to commit murder,

which depraves whole races of men by means of opium and brandy, etc., or shall I refuse to take a share in a government, the doings of which are contrary to my conscience? But what will come of it, what sort of State will there be, if I act in this way, is a thing I do not know and which I shall not say I do not wish to know, but which I cannot know.

The main strength of Christ's teaching consists especially in this: that He brought the question of conduct from a world of conjecture and eternal doubt, down to a firm and indisputable ground. Some people say, "But we also do not deny the evils of the existing order and the necessity of changing it, but we wish to change it, not suddenly, by means of refusing to take any part in the government, but, on the contrary, by participating in the government, by gaining more and more freedom, political rights, and obtaining the election of the true friends of the people and the enemies of all violence."

This would be very well, if taking part in one's government and trying to improve it, could coincide with the aim of human life. But, unfortunately, it not only does not coincide, but is quite opposed to it.

Supposing human life to be limited to this world, its aim can consist only in man's individual happiness; if, on the other hand, life does not end in this world, its aim can consist only in doing the will of God. In both cases it does not coincide with the progress of governments. If it lies here, in man's personal happiness, and if life ends here, what should I care about the future prosperity of a government which will come about when, in all probability, I shall be there no more? But if my life is immortal, then the prosperity of the English, the Russian, the German, or any other state, which is to come in the twentieth century, is too paltry an aim for me, and can never satisfy the cravings of my immortal soul. A sufficient aim for my life is either my immediate personal good, which does not coincide with the government measures and improvements, or the fulfilment of the will of God, which also not only cannot be conciliated with the requirements of government, but is

quite opposed to them. The vital question not only for a Christian, but, I think, for any reasonable being, when he is summoned to take part in governmental acts, lies not in the prosperity of his state or government, but in this question: —

"Wilt thou, a being of reason and goodness, who comes to-day and may vanish to-morrow, wilt thou, if thou believest in the existence of God, act against His law and His will, knowing that any moment thou canst return to Him; or, if thou dost not believe in Him, wilt thou, knowing that if thou errest thou shalt never be able to redeem thy error, wilt thou, nevertheless, act in opposition to the principles of reason and love, by which alone thou canst be guided in life? Wilt thou, at the request of thy government, take oaths, defend, by compulsion, the owner of land or capital, wilt thou pay taxes for keeping policemen, soldiers, warships, wilt thou take part in parliaments, law courts, condemnations, and wars?"

And to all this — I will not say for a Christian, but for a reasonable being — there can be but one answer: "No, I cannot, and will not." But they say, "This will destroy the State and the existing order." If the fulfilment of the will of God is destroying the existing order, is it not a proof that this existing order is contrary to the will of God, and ought to be destroyed?

January, 1895.

LETTER TO THE LIBERALS[1]

I SHOULD be very glad to join you and your associates — whose work I know and appreciate — in standing up for the rights of the "Literature Committee," and in opposing the enemies of popular education. But in the sphere in which you are working, I see no way to resist them.

My only consolation is that I, too, am constantly engaged in struggling against the same enemies of enlightenment, though in another manner.

Concerning the special question with which you are preoccupied, I think that, in place of the "Literature Committee" which has been prohibited, a number of other "Literature Associations," to pursue the same objects, should be formed without consulting the government, and without asking permission from any censor. Let government, if it likes, prosecute these "Literature Associations," punish the members, banish them, etc. If government does that, it will merely cause people to

[1] This letter was addressed to a Russian lady who wrote to Tolstoĭ asking his advice or assistance when the "Literature Committee," *Komitet Gramotnosti*, in which she was actively engaged, was closed. The circumstances were as follows: A "Voluntary Economic Society" (founded in the reign of Catherine the Great) existed, and was allowed to debate economic problems within certain limits. Its existence was sanctioned by, and it was under the control of, the Ministry of the Interior. A branch of this society was formed called the "Literature Committee." This branch aimed at spreading good and wholesome literature among the people and in the schools, by establishing libraries or in other ways. However, their views as to what books it is good for people to read did not tally with those of the government, and in 1896 it was decreed that the "Voluntary Economic Society" should be transferred from the supervision of the Ministry of the Interior to that of the Ministry of Education. This sounded harmless, but translated into unofficial language it meant that the activity of the Committee was to terminate, and the proceeding of the whole Society was to be reduced to a formality. — TR.

attach special importance to good books and to libraries, and it will strengthen the trend toward enlightenment.

It seems to me that it is now specially important to do what is right quietly and persistently, not only without asking permission from government, but consciously avoiding its participation. The strength of the government lies in the people's ignorance, and government knows this, and will, therefore, always oppose true enlightenment. It is time we realized that fact. And it is most undesirable to let government, while it is diffusing darkness, pretend it is busy with the enlightenment of the people. It is doing this now, by means of all sorts of pseudo-educational establishments which it controls: schools, high schools, universities, academies, and all kinds of committees and congresses. But good is good, and enlightenment is enlightenment, only when it is quite good and quite enlightened, and not when it is toned down to meet the requirements of Delyanof's or Durnovo's [1] circulars. And I am extremely sorry when I see valuable, disinterested, and self-sacrificing efforts spent unprofitably. Sometimes it seems to me quite comical to see good, wise people spending their strength in a struggle against government, to be maintained on the basis of laws which that very government itself makes just what it likes.

The matter is, it seems to me, this: —

There are people (we ourselves are such) who realize that our government is very bad, and who struggle against it. From before the days of Radishchef [2] and the Decembrists [3] there have been two ways of carrying on the struggle; one way is that of Stenka Razin,[4] Pu-

[1] Delyanof was Minister of Education and Durnovo was Minister of the Interior when the Committee was suppressed. The latter is now President of the Council of Ministers. — Tr.

[2] Radishchef, the author of "A Journey from Petersburg to Moscow," was a Liberal whose efforts toward the abolition of serfdom displeased the government. He committed suicide in 1802. — Tr.

[3] The Decembrists were members of the organization which attempted, by force, to terminate autocratic government in Russia when Nicholas I. ascended the throne in 1825. — Tr.

[4] Stenka Razin was a Cossack who raised a formidable insurrection in

gatchef,[1] the Decembrists, the Revolutionary party[2] of the years sixty, the Terrorists[3] of the thirteenth of March, and others.

The other way is that which is preached and practised by you, — the method of the "Gradualists," which consists in carrying on the struggle without violence and within the limits of the law, conquering constitutional rights bit by bit.

Both these methods have been employed unceasingly within my memory for more than half a century, and yet the state of things grows worse and worse. Even such signs of improvement as do show themselves have come, not from either of these kinds of activity, but from causes of which I will speak later on, and in spite of the harm done by these two kinds of activity. Meanwhile, the power against which we struggle grows ever greater, stronger, and more insolent. The last rays of self-government — the *zemstvos* (local government boards), public trial, your Literature Committee, etc. — are all being done away with.

Now that both methods have been ineffectually tried for so long a time, we may, it seems to me, see clearly that neither the one nor the other will do, — and why this is so. To me, at least, who have always disliked our government, but have never adopted either of the above methods of resisting it, the defects of both methods are apparent.

the seventeenth century. He was eventually defeated and captured, and was executed in Moscow in 1671. — Tr.

[1] Pugatchef headed the most formidable Russian insurrection of the eighteenth century. He was executed in Moscow in 1775. — Tr.

[2] The series of reforms, including the abolition of serfdom, which followed the Crimean War and the death of Nicholas I., were, from the first, adopted half-heartedly. Since about the time of the Polish insurrection (1863) the reactionary party obtained control of the government and has kept it ever since. The more vehement members of the Liberal party, losing hope of constitutional reform, organized a Revolutionary party in the sixties, and later on the Terrorist party was formed, which organized assassinations as a means toward liberty, equality, and fraternity. — Tr.

[3] Alexander II. was killed by a bomb thrown at him in the streets of Petersburg on the thirteenth of March (N. S.), 1881. This assassination was organized by the Terrorist party. — Tr.

The first way is unsatisfactory because (even could an attempt to alter the existing régime by violent means succeed) there would be no guarantee that the new organization would be durable, and that the enemies of that new order would not, at some convenient opportunity, triumph by using violence such as has been used against them, as has happened over and over again in France and wherever else there have been revolutions. And so the new order of things, established by violence, would have continually to be supported by violence, *i.e.* by wrong-doing. And, consequently, it would inevitably and very quickly be vitiated like the order it replaced. And in case of failure, all the violence of the revolutionists only strengthens the order of things they strive against (as has always been the case, in our Russian experience, from Pugatchef's rebellion to the attempt of the thirteenth of March), for it drives the whole crowd of undecided people, who stand wavering between the two parties, into the camp of the conservative and retrograde party. So I think that, guided by both reason and experience, we may boldly say that this means, besides being immoral, is also irrational and ineffective.

The other method is, in my opinion, even less effective or rational. It is ineffective and irrational because government, having in its hands the whole power (the army, the administration, the Church, the schools, and police), and framing what are called the laws, on the basis of which the Liberals wish to resist it, — this government knows very well what is really dangerous to it, and will never let people who submit to it, and act under its guidance, do anything that will undermine its authority. For instance, take the case before us: a government such as ours (or any other), which rests on the ignorance of the people, will never consent to their being really enlightened. It will sanction all kinds of pseudo-educational organizations, controlled by itself: schools, high schools, universities, academies, and all kinds of committees and congresses and publications sanctioned by the censor, — as long as those organizations and publications serve its purpose, *i.e.* stupefy

people, or, at least, do not hinder the stupefaction of people. But as soon as those organizations, or publications, attempt to cure that on which the power of government rests, *i.e.* the blindness of the people, the government will simply, and without rendering account to any one, or saying why it acts so and not otherwise, pronounce its "veto" and will rearrange, or close, the establishments and organizations and will forbid the publications. And therefore, as both reason and experience clearly show, such an illusory, gradual conquest of rights is a self-deception which suits the government admirably, and which it, therefore, is even ready to encourage.

But not only is this activity irrational and ineffectual, it is also harmful. It is harmful because enlightened, good, and honest people by entering the ranks of the government give it a moral authority which but for them it would not possess. If the government were made up entirely of that coarse element — the violators, self-seekers, and flatterers — who form its core, it could not continue to exist. The fact that honest and enlightened people are found who participate in the affairs of the government gives government whatever it possesses of moral prestige.

That is one evil resulting from the activity of Liberals who participate in the affairs of government, or who come to terms with it. Another evil of such activity is that, in order to secure opportunities to carry on their work, these highly enlightened and honest people have to begin to compromise, and so, little by little, come to consider that, for a good end, one may swerve somewhat from truth in word and deed. For instance, that one may, though not believing in the established Church, go through its ceremonies; may take oaths; and may, when necessary for the success of some affair, present petitions couched in language which is untrue and offensive to man's natural dignity: may enter the army; may take part in a local government which has been stripped of all its powers; may serve as a master or a professor, teaching not what one considers

necessary oneself, but what one is told to preach by government; and that one may even become a Zemsky Nachalnik,[1] submitting to governmental demands and instructions which violate one's conscience; may edit newspapers and periodicals, remaining silent about what ought to be mentioned, and printing what one is ordered to print; and entering into these compromises — the limits of which cannot be foreseen — enlightened and honest people (who alone could form some barrier to the infringements of human liberty by the government, imperceptibly retreating ever farther and farther from the demands of conscience) fall at last into a position of complete dependency on government. They receive rewards and salaries from it, and, continuing to imagine they are forwarding liberal ideas, they become the humble servants and supporters of the very order against which they set out to fight.

It is true that there are also better, sincere people in the Liberal camp, whom the government cannot bribe, and who remain unbought and free from salaries and position. But even these people have been insnared in the nets spread by government, beat their wings in their cages (as you are now doing with your Committee), unable to advance from the spot they are on. Or else, becoming enraged, they go over to the revolutionary camp; or they shoot themselves, or take to drink, or they abandon the whole struggle in despair, and, oftenest of all, retire into literary activity, in which, yielding to the demands of the censor, they say only what they are allowed to say, and — by that very silence about what

[1] During the Reform period, in the reign of Alexander II., many iniquities of the old judicial system were abolished. Among other innovations "Judges of the Peace" were appointed to act as magistrates. They were elected (indirectly); if possessed of a certain property qualification, men of any class were eligible, and the regulations under which they acted were drawn up in a comparatively liberal spirit. Under Alexander III. the office of "Judge of the Peace" was abolished, and was replaced by "Zemsky Nachalniks." Only members of the aristocracy were eligible; they were not elected, but appointed by government, and they were armed with authority to have peasants flogged. They were less like magistrates and more like government officials than the "Judges of the Peace" had been. — Tr.

is most important — convey to the public distorted views which just suit the government. But they continue to imagine that they are serving society by the writings which give them the means of subsistence.

Thus, both reflection and experience alike show me that both the means of combating government, heretofore believed in, are not only ineffectual, but actually tend to strengthen the power and the irresponsibility of government.

What is to be done? Evidently not what for seventy years past has proved fruitless, and has only produced inverse result. What is to be done? Just what those have done, thanks to whose activity is due that progress toward light and good which has been achieved since the world began, and is still being achieved to-day. That is what must be done. And what is it?

Merely the simple, quiet, truthful carrying on of what you consider good and needful, quite independently of government, and of whether it likes it or not. In other words: standing up for your rights, not as a member of the Literature Committee, not as a deputy, not as a landowner, not as a merchant, not even as a member of Parliament; but standing up for your rights as a rational and free man, and defending them, not as the rights of local boards or committees are defended, with concessions and compromises, but without any concessions and compromises, in the only way in which moral and human dignity can be defended.

Successfully to defend a fortress one has to burn all the houses in the suburbs, and to leave only what is strong and what we intend not to surrender on any account. Only from the basis of this firm stronghold can we conquer all we require. True, the rights of a member of Parliament, or even of a member of a local board, are greater than the rights of a plain man; and it seems as if we could do much by using those rights. But the hitch is that in order to obtain the rights of a member of Parliament, or of a committeeman, one has to abandon part of one's rights as a man. And having abandoned part of one's rights as a man, there

is no longer any fixed point of leverage, and one can no longer either conquer or maintain any real right. In order to lift others out of a quagmire one must stand on firm ground oneself, and if, hoping the better to assist others, you go into the quagmire, you will not pull others out, but will yourself sink in.

It may be very desirable and useful to get an eight-hour day legalized by Parliament, or to get a liberal program for school libraries sanctioned by your Committee; but if, as a means to this end, a member of Parliament must publicly lift up his hand and lie, lie when taking an oath, by expressing in words respect for what he does not respect; or (in our own case) if, in order to pass most liberal programs, it is necessary to take part in public worship, to be sworn, to wear a uniform, to write mendacious and flattering petitions, and to make speeches of a similar character, etc., — then by doing these things and forgoing our dignity as men, we lose much more than we gain, and by trying to reach one definite aim (which very often is not reached) we deprive ourselves of the possibility of reaching other aims which are of supreme importance. Only people who have something which they will on no account and under no circumstances yield can resist a government and curb it. To have power to resist you must stand on firm ground.

And the government knows this very well, and is concerned, above all else, to worm out of men that which will not yield, in other words, the dignity of man. When that is wormed out of them, government calmly proceeds to do what it likes, knowing that it will no longer meet any real resistance. A man who consents publicly to swear, pronouncing the degrading and mendacious words of the oath; or submissively to wait several hours, dressed up in a uniform, at a minister's reception; or to inscribe himself as a special constable for the coronation; or to fast and receive communion for respectability's sake; or to ask of the head censor whether he may, or may not, express such and such thoughts, etc., — such a man is no longer feared by government.

Alexander II. said he did not fear the Liberals because

he knew they could all be bought, if not with money, then with honors.

People who take part in government, or work under its direction, may deceive themselves or their sympathizers by making a show of struggling; but those against whom they struggle — the government — know quite well, by the strength of the resistance experienced, that these people are not really pulling, but are only pretending to. And our government knows this with respect to the Liberals, and constantly tests the quality of the opposition, and finding that genuine resistance is practically non-existent, it continues its course in full assurance that it can do what it likes with such opponents.

The government of Alexander III. knew this very well, and, knowing it, deliberately destroyed all that the Liberals thought they had achieved and were so proud of. It altered and limited trial by jury; it abolished the "Judges of the Peace"; it canceled the rights of the universities; it perverted the whole system of instruction in the high schools; it reëstablished the cadet corps, and even the state's sale of intoxicants; it established the Zemsky Nachalniks; it legalized flogging; it almost abolished the local government boards (*Zemstvos*); it gave uncontrolled power to the governors of provinces; it encouraged the quartering of troops (*eksekutsia*) on the peasants in punishment; it increased the practice of "administrative"[1] banishment and imprisonment, and the capital punishment of political offenders; it renewed religious persecutions; it brought to a climax the use of barbarous superstitions; it legalized murder in duels; under the name of a "state of siege"[2] it established lawless-

[1] Sentenced by "*Administrative Order*" means sentenced by the arbitrary will of government, or the chief of the gendarmes of a province. Administrative sentences are often inflicted without the victim being heard in his own defense, or even knowing what acts (real or supposed) have led to his punishment. — Tr.

[2] The "Statute of Increased Protection," usually translated "state of siege," was first applied to Petersburg and Moscow only, but was subsequently extended to Odessa, Kief, Kharkof, and Warsaw. Under this

ness with capital punishment, as a normal condition of things, — and in all this it met with no protest except from one honorable woman[1] who boldly told the government the truth as she saw it.

The Liberals whispered among themselves that these things displeased them, but they continued to take part in legal proceedings, and in the local governments, and in the universities, and in government service, and on the press. In the press they hinted at what they were allowed to hint at, and kept silence on matters they had to be silent about, but they printed whatever they were told to print. So that every reader (who was not privy to the whisperings of the editorial rooms), on receiving a Liberal paper or magazine, read the announcement of the most cruel and irrational measure unaccompanied by comment or sign of disapproval, sycophantic and flattering addresses to those guilty of enacting these measures, and frequently even praise of the measures themselves. Thus all the dismal activity of the government of Alexander III., — destroying whatever good had begun to take root in the days of Alexander II., and striving to turn Russia back to the barbarity of the commencement of this century, — all this dismal activity of gallows, rods, persecutions, and stupefaction of the people has become (even in the liberal papers and magazines) the basis of an insane laudation of Alexander III. and of his acclamation as a great man and a model of human dignity.

This same thing is being continued in the new reign. The young man who succeeded the late Tsar, having no understanding of life, was assured, by the men in power to whom it was profitable to say so, that the best way to rule a hundred million people is to do as his father did, *i.e.* not to ask advice from any one but

law the power of capital punishment was intrusted to the governor-generals of the provinces in question. — Tr.

[1] Madame Tsebrikof, a well-known writer and literary critic, wrote a polite but honest letter to Alexander III., pointing out what was being done by the government. She was banished to a distant province for a time and was then allowed to reside, not in Petersburg, but in the government of Tver. — Tr.

just to do what comes into one's head, or what the first flatterer about him advises. And, fancying that unlimited autocracy is a sacred life-principle of the Russian people, the young man begins to reign; and, instead of asking the representatives of the Russian people to help him with their advice in the task of ruling (about which he, educated in a cavalry regiment, knows nothing, and can know nothing), he rudely and insolently shouts at those representatives of the Russian people who visit him with congratulations, and he calls the desire, timidly expressed by some of them,[1] to be allowed to inform the authorities of their needs, "nonsensical fancies."

And what followed? Was Russian society shocked? Did enlightened and honest people — the Liberals — express their indignation and repulsion? Did they at least refrain from laudation of this government and from participating in it and encouraging it? Not at all. From that time a specially intense competition in adulation commenced, both of the father and of the son who imitated him. And not a protesting voice was heard, except in one anonymous letter, cautiously expressing disapproval of the young Tsar's conduct. And, from all sides, fulsome and flattering addresses were brought to the Tsar, as well as (for some reason or other) ikons,[2] which nobody wanted and which served merely as objects of idolatry to benighted people. An insane expenditure of money, the coronation, amazing in its absurdity, was arranged; the arrogance of the rulers and their contempt of the people caused thousands to perish in a fearful calamity, which was regarded as a slight eclipse of the festivities, which should not terminate on that account.[3]

[1] By the representatives of the Tver Zemstvo and others, at a reception in the Winter Palace on the accession of Nicholas II. — Tr.

[2] Conventional painting of God, Jesus, Angels, Saints, the Mother of God, etc., usually done on bits of wood, with much gilding. They are hung up in the corners of the rooms as well as in churches, etc., to be prayed to. — Tr.

[3] As part of the coronation festivities a "people's fête" was arranged to take place on the Khodinskoye Field, near Moscow. Owing to the incredible stupidity of the arrangements, some three thousand people were

An exhibition[1] was organized, which no one wanted except those who organized it, and which cost millions of rubles. In the Chancery of the Holy Synod, with unparalleled effrontery, a new and supremely stupid means of mystifying people was devised, viz., the enshrinement of the incorruptible body of a saint whom nobody knew anything about.[2] The stringency of the censor was increased. Religious persecution was made more severe. The "state of siege," *i.e.* the legalization of lawlessness, was continued, and the state of things is still becoming worse and worse.

And I think that all this would not have happened if those enlightened, honest people, who are now occupied in Liberal activity on the basis of legality, in local governments, in the committees, in censor-ruled literature, etc., had not devoted their energies to the task of circumventing the government, and, without abandoning the forms it has itself arranged, of finding ways to make it act so as to harm and injure itself;[3] but, abstaining from taking any part in government or in any business bound up with government, had merely claimed their rights as men.

"You wish, instead of 'Judges of the Peace,' to institute Zemsky Nachalniks with birch rods; that is your business, but we will not go to law before your Zemsky Nachalniks, and will not ourselves accept appointment to such an office: you wish to make trial by jury a mere formality; that is your business, but we will not serve

killed when trying to enter the grounds, besides a large number who were injured. This occurred on Saturday, May 18 (O. S.), 1896. That same evening the emperor danced at the grand ball given by the French ambassador in Moscow. — Tr.

[1] The unsuccessful exhibition at Nizhni in 1896. — Tr.

[2] The "incorruptible" body of Saint Theodosius was exhibited to the people and to the pilgrims who assembled from all parts of Russia, and was then enshrined with great pomp in the Cathedral of Chernigof in 1896. These relics duly performed miracles, which were fully reported in the official papers, and none of the papers ventured to express any doubt as to the genuine nature of the whole performance. — Tr.

[3] Sometimes it seems to me simply laughable that people can occupy themselves with such an evidently hopeless business; it is like undertaking to cut off an animal's leg without its noticing it. — Author's Note.

as judges, or as advocates, or as jurymen: you wish, under the name of a 'state of siege,' to establish despotism; that is your business, but we will not participate in it, and will plainly call the 'state of siege' despotism, and capital punishment inflicted without trial, murder: you wish to organize cadet corps, or classical high schools, in which military exercises and the Orthodox faith are taught; that is your affair, but we will not teach in such schools, or send our children to them, but will educate our children as seems to us right: you decide to reduce the local government boards (*zemstvos*) to impotence; we will not take part in it: you prohibit the publication of literature that displeases you; you may seize books and punish the printers, but you cannot prevent our speaking and writing, and we shall continue to do so: you demand an oath of allegiance to the Tsar; we will not accede to what is so stupid, false, and degrading: you order us to serve in the army; we will not do so, because wholesale murder is as opposed to our conscience as individual murder, and above all, because the promise to murder whomsoever a commander may tell us to murder is the meanest act a man can commit: you profess a religion which is a thousand years behind the times, with an 'Iberian Mother of God,'[1] relics, and coronations; that is your affair, but we do not acknowledge idolatry and superstition to be religion, but call them idolatry and superstition, and we try to free people from them."

And what can government do against such activity? It can banish or imprison a man for preparing a bomb, or even for printing a proclamation to working-men; it can transfer your "Literature Committee" from one ministry to another, or close a Parliament, — but what can a government do with a man who is not willing

[1] "The Iberian Mother of God" is a wonder-working ikon of the Virgin Mary which draws a large revenue. It is frequently taken to visit the sick, and travels about with six horses; the attendant priest sits in the carriage bareheaded. The smallest fee charged is six shillings for a visit, but more is usually given. — Tr.

publicly to lie with uplifted hand, or who is not willing to send his children to an establishment which he considers bad, or who is not willing to learn to kill people, or is not willing to take part in idolatry, or is not willing to take part in coronations, deputations, and addresses, or who says and writes what he thinks and feels? By prosecuting such a man, government secures for him general sympathy, making him a martyr, and it undermines the foundations on which it is itself built, for in so acting, instead of protecting human rights, it itself infringes them.

And it is only necessary for all those good, enlightened, and honest people, whose strength is now wasted in revolutionary, socialistic, or liberal activity, harmful to themselves and to their cause, to begin to act thus, and a nucleus of honest, enlightened, and moral people would form around them, united in the same thoughts and the same feelings; and to this nucleus the ever wavering crowd of average people would at once gravitate, and public opinion — the only power which subdues governments — would become evident, demanding freedom of speech, freedom of conscience, justice, and humanity. And as soon as public opinion was formulated, not only would it be impossible to close the "Literature Committee," but all those inhuman organizations — the "state of siege," the secret police, the censor, Schlüsselburg,[1] the Holy Synod, and the rest — against which the revolutionists and the liberals are now struggling would disappear of themselves.

So that two methods of opposing the government have been tried, both unsuccessfully, and it now remains to try a third and a last method, one not yet tried, but one which, I think, cannot but be successful. Briefly, that means this: that all enlightened and honest people should try to be as good as they can, and not even good in all respects, but only in one; namely, in observing one of the most elementary virtues — to be honest, and not to lie, but to act and speak

[1] The most terrible of the places of imprisonment in Petersburg; the Russian Bastile. — Tr.

so that your motives should be intelligible to an affectionate seven-year-old boy; to act so that your boy should not say, "But why, papa, did you say so-and-so, and now you do and say something quite different?" This method seems very weak, and yet I am convinced that it is this method, and this method only, that has moved humanity since the race began. Only because there were straight men, truthful and courageous, who made no concessions that infringed their dignity as men, have all those beneficent revolutions been accomplished of which mankind now have the advantage, from the abolition of torture and slavery up to liberty of speech and of conscience. Nor can this be otherwise, for what conscience (the highest forefeeling man possesses of the truth accessible to him) demands, is always, and in all respects, the activity most fruitful and most necessary for humanity at the given time. Only a man who lives according to his conscience can have influence on people, and only activity that accords with one's conscience can be useful.

But I must explain my meaning. To say that the most effectual means of achieving the ends toward which revolutionists and liberals are striving, is by activity in accord with their consciences, does not mean that people can begin to live conscientiously in order to achieve those ends. To begin to live conscientiously on purpose to achieve any external ends is impossible.

To live according to one's conscience is possible only as a result of firm and clear religious convictions; the beneficent result of these in our external life will inevitably follow. Therefore the gist of what I wished to say to you is this: that it is unprofitable for good, sincere people to spend their powers of mind and soul in gaining small practical ends; *e.g.* in the various struggles of nationalities, or parties, or in Liberal wire-pulling, while they have not reached a clear and firm religious perception, *i.e.* a consciousness of the meaning and purpose of their life. I think that all the powers of soul and of mind of good people, who wish to be of

service to men, should be directed to that end. When that is accomplished, all else will be accomplished too.

Forgive me for sending you so long a letter, which perhaps you did not at all need, but I have long wished to express my views on this question. I even began a long article about it, but I shall hardly have time to finish it before death comes, and therefore I wished to get at least part of it said. Forgive me if I am in error about anything.

RELIGION AND MORALITY[1]

YOU ask me — first, What I understand by the word "religion"; and, second, Whether I admit the existence of morality, independent of religion as understood by me.

I will try according to the measure of my ability to answer these highly important questions, well put by you.

There are three separate meanings implied by the word "religion." First — That religion is a certain true revelation given by God to men, from which proceeds the worship of God by men. Such an interpretation is applied to religion by all believers in one of its existing forms, who consequently regard their particular form as the only true one. Second — That religion is a collection of superstitious statements, from which a worship equally superstitious is derived. Such an interpretation is applied to religion by skeptics in general; by those, that is, who do not believe in the religion they are defining. Third — That religion is a compilation of propositions and rules, invented by clever men, and a necessity for the vulgar herd, as much for their consolation as for their subjugation and the restraint of their passions. Such an interpretation is applied to religion by those indifferent to it personally, but who regard it as a useful instrument in the governance of mankind.

By the first definition, religion is an indubitable and irrefragable truth, the propagation of which amongst all men and by every possible means is necessary to the welfare of mankind. By the second, religion is a mass of superstition from which it is desirable, and even needful to the welfare of humanity, that mankind should be

[1] A reply to two questions put by the German Ethical Society.

delivered. By the third, religion is a contrivance useful to humanity, though unnecessary for those of the highest development, but which, as indispensable to the consolation and control of the vulgar, it is needful to maintain.

The first definition is similar to one a man might make of music by defining it as his most familiar and favorite song, with which all the world should be acquainted. The second, in the same connection, would be that applied to music by a man who neither understood nor cared for it, and who called it the production of sound by the throat, mouth, or hands upon certain instruments; a useless and even objectionable occupation, from which it was necessary to wean men as soon as possible. The third is similar to that which a man would apply to music, who considered it a useful contrivance for teaching men to dance or to march, for which purposes it should be maintained.

The difference and narrowness of these definitions arises from their not taking hold of the essence of music, but merely defining its features from the definer's point of view. So is it also with the three definitions of religion. According to the first, religion is whatever the definer thinks that he is right in believing. According to the second, it is that which, in the definer's opinion, people are wrong in believing. According to the third, it is, by the standard of the definer, what men are benefited by believing. All these define, not what constitutes the essence of religion, but the definer's idea of what religion constitutes. The first supplants the notion of religion by the faith of him who defines it; the second, by the faith by which other people regard it; the third, by the faith of men in whatever may be supplied them as religion.

But what is faith? Why do people believe in what they believe? What is faith? and whence has it arisen?

Amongst the majority of the educated classes it is regarded as a settled question that the essence of every religion has its origin in the personification, deification,

and worship of the forces of nature — proceeding from superstitious fear of nature's incomprehensible phenomena. This view is blindly accepted, without criticism, by the educated throng of our time, and it not only does not meet with any refutation from men of science, but, for the most part, finds, precisely among them, most definite confirmation. If, indeed, a voice is at times heard, as that of Max Müller, which attributes to religion another origin and sense, its sound is lost in the almost unamimous affirmation that religion is the outcome of ignorance and superstition.

Not long ago, at the beginning of the present century, the most advanced thinkers, while regretting Catholicism, Protestantism, and Greek Orthodoxy, as did the Encyclopedists at the end of the eighteenth, did not deny that religion has been and is an indispensable condition in the lives of all. Not to mention the deists, — as Bernardin de St. Pierre, Diderot, and Rousseau, — Voltaire raised a monument to the Deity, and Robespierre proclaimed a festal day in honor of the Supreme Being. But at the present day, thanks to the frivolous and superficial teaching of Auguste Comte (who sincerely believed, in common with the majority of Frenchmen, that Christianity is nothing but Catholicism, and therefore saw in Catholicism the complete realization of Christianity), the educated throng, which always readily and greedily accepts the lowest view, have decided or conceded that religion is only a certain long-obsolete aspect in the development of humanity which hinders progress. It is agreed that humanity has already outlived two periods, the religious and metaphysical, and has now entered into the third and highest, the scientific, and that all religious phenomena are only the expiring breaths of an outgrown spiritual organ of humanity, once needful, but long ago lost to sense and significance, like the nails on a horse's fifth toe.

It is agreed that religion had its origin in the worship of imaginary beings, evoked by fear of the incomprehensible forces of Nature, as in ancient times thought Democritus, and as is affirmed by the modern philoso-

phers and historians of religion. But, putting aside the fact that the recognition of some unseen and supernatural being or beings has preceded the sense of fear evoked by the unknown forces of Nature, as is proved by hundreds of advanced and learned thinkers of the past, — the Socrates, Descartes, Newtons, and similar men in our own times, who, being in no wise afraid of Nature's blind forces, admitted the existence of some supreme supernatural Being, — the affirmation that religion was the outcome of man's superstitious fear of the incomprehensible powers of Nature in reality does not answer the chief question: From what in man does the idea of an unseen and supernatural being derive existence?

If men were afraid of thunder and lightning, they would fear them as thunder and lightning; but why invent an unseen and supernatural Being, living in certain regions, and occasionally flinging bolts at men?

If men were astounded by the aspect of death, they would fear to die; but why should they invent souls of the dead with whom to enter into imaginary communion? On account of thunder men might hide; on account of the fear of death they might flee from it; but instead they devised an eternal, all-powerful Being, on whom they reckon themselves dependent, and the living souls of the dead — not from fear alone, but for some other reasons. And in these reasons, evidently, lies the essence of what is called religion.

Moreover, every man who has ever, if only in childhood, felt the religious sentiment, knows from his own experience that such a sentiment has always been awakened in him, not by external, terrifying, material phenomena, but by an internal consciousness of his own frailty, solitude, and sinfulness, and connected not at all with any dread of the unknown forces of Nature. Hence man may, both by external observation and by personal experience, ascertain that religion is not the worship of deities, evoked by superstitious fear of unknown natural forces, and only proper to mankind at a certain period of its development, but something independent altogether of fear, or of a degree of culture, and not liable

to destruction by any access of enlightenment; just as man's consciousness of his finality in the infinite universe, and of his sinfulness (*i.e.* his non-fulfilment of all he might and ought to have done), always has existed and always will exist while man remains man.

In truth, every man, as soon as he emerges from the animal existence of infancy and childhood, — during which he lives by the pressure of those claims which are presented to him by his animal nature, — every man who is awake to reasonable consciousness cannot fail to remark how the life about him renews itself, undestroyed, and steadfastly subordinate to one definite eternal law; and that he alone, self-recognized as a creature separate from the entire universe, is condemned to death, to a disappearance in unbounded space and limitless time, and to the painful consciousness of responsibility for his actions — a consciousness, so to say, that, not having acted well, he might have acted better. And, with this understanding, every reasoning man must stop, think, and ask himself — wherefore this momentary, indefinite, unstable existence within a universe uncompassed, eternal, firmly defined?

Man cannot, when he enters into his full measure of life, elude this question. It confronts all, and all in some fashion answer it, and it is this answer which is the essence of religion, the answer to the question, Wherefore do I live, and what is my relation to the infinite universe about me? All religious metaphysics, — their teaching as to deities, the origin of existence, external worship, — though generally taken for religion, are only the various labels accompanying religion, and changing with a change in its geographical, historical, or ethnographical conditions. There is no religion, however cultured, however crude, but has its beginnings in the assessment of the relations of man to the surrounding universe or to its first cause. There is no ceremony of religion so rustic, nor ritual so refined, which has not a like foundation. All the teaching of religion is the expression of the relations in which the founder of the religion regards himself — and therefore all mankind —

as standing toward the universe or toward its origin and first cause.

The expressions of these relations are very numerous, and depend on the conditions of race and time in which the founder of the religion and those appropriating it are placed. Moreover, these expressions are variously misinterpreted and deformed by the founder's disciples, who, often for hundreds, sometimes for thousands, of years are in advance of the understanding of the masses. Hence, many accounts of this relation of man to the universe or its first cause, called religions, appear to exist, but in substance there are only three of an essential quality: (1) the primitive personal relation; (2) the heathen social family, or state relation; (3) the Christian, or divine relation. Strictly speaking, man can be related to the universe in only two ways: the *personal*, which is the recognition of life as the welfare of the individual, separately or in union with others; and the *Christian*, which is the recognition of life as the service of Him who sent man into the world. The social relation of man to the universe is merely an enlargement of the personal.

The first of these recognitions (or perceptions), which is the most ancient, and which is now found only amongst men of the lowest order of development, consists in the consideration by man of himself as a self-sufficient being, existing with the sole purpose of obtaining for himself the greatest possible amount of personal happiness from the world about him, indifferent to the amount of suffering thus entailed on other creatures. From this early conception of a relation to the universe — which suffices for every child, as it sufficed for humanity on the threshold of its development, and still satisfies many savage tribes and men of a coarse moral fiber — have proceeded all the ancient heathen religions, as well as the corrupt and lower forms of more recent religions, as Buddhism,[1] Taoism, Mohammedanism, and Christianity in its perverted issues. To this same

[1] Buddhism, although it demands from its disciples resignation of all the pleasures of the world, and even of life itself, is founded on the same idea

perception the more modern spiritism owes its origin, being founded on the preservation and welfare of the individual. All heathen superstitions, divination, deification of beings in blissful existence with the attributes of men, or of saints interceding for man, all sacrifices and supplications for earthly advantages or protection from calamity, proceed from the same conception of life.

The second or social heathen conception of man's relation to the universe, established in the next stage of development and natural to the state of manhood, consists in the admission that the meaning of life is to be discovered, not in the happiness of individuals, but in the welfare of a certain association of them, as the family, tribe, state, nation, even humanity, according to the attempted religion of the Positivists. In this perception, the attention is transferred from the individual to the family, tribe, state, or nation — that is, to an association of individuals, the welfare of whom is, in this case, regarded as the object of existence. All patriarchal and social religions of a like character have their origin in this conception: the religions of the Chinese, Japanese, of the chosen people — the Jews, the State religion of the Romans, our own religion of Church and State, debased to this connection by Augustine, though wrongly called Christian, and the Positivists' hypothetical religion of humanity. Ancestor-worship in China and Japan, emperor-worship in Rome, the manifold ceremonies of the Jews to preserve their covenant with God, all family, social, Church, Christian *Te Deums* for the welfare of the State and for military success, are founded on this same conception of the relation of man to the universe.

The third conception of this relation — the Christian one — of which every man of advanced years is involuntarily conscious, and upon which humanity, in my

of an individual sufficient for himself, and predestined to happiness, or rather — in comparison with the right of man to enjoyment as proclaimed by positive heathenism — to the absence of pain. Heathenism holds that the universe should serve the interest of the individual, Buddhism that the universe must be dissolved as the producing factor in the miseries of mankind. Buddhism is only negative heathenism. — AUTHOR'S NOTE.

opinion, is now entering, consists in the acknowledgment by man that the meaning of life is not to be found in the attainment of his own individual aim, nor in the attainment of that of any association of individuals, but solely in serving that Supreme Will, which has produced man, and the entire universe for the attainment, not of the aims of man, but of the Superior Will which has produced him. From this conception, the loftiest religious teaching known to us has proceeded, germs of which existed in the teaching of the Pythagoreans, Essenes, Egyptians, Persians, Brahmans, Buddhists, and Taoists, in their best representatives, but which has received its final and fullest expression only in the true, unperverted interpretation of Christianity. All the ritual of those ancient religions, proceeding from this conception of life, all the modern external forms of association of the Unitarians, Universalists, Quakers, Austrian-Nazarenes and Russian Dukhobors,[1] and all so-called rationalistic sects, their sermons, hymns, intercourse, and books, are religious manifestations of this conception of man's relation to the universe.

All possible religions of every kind are inevitably distributed between these three conceptions. Every man who has emerged from the animal condition must invariably adopt one of these conceptions of his relation to the universe, and in this adoption consists the real religion of every man, outside any confession of faith to which he may nominally adhere. Every man inevitably, one way or another, pictures to himself his own relation to the universe, because a reasoning being cannot live in the world without some sort of consciousness of his relation to it. And as only three explanations of this relation have been produced by humanity, and are known to us, every man must inevitably hold by one of the three, and, whether he will or not, belongs to one of the three fundamental religions, among which all humanity may be divided. And hence the general as-

[1] Spirit-wrestlers : a section of the so-called *raskolniks* or sectarians, having a spiritual conception of life and the gospels, and who claim to fight against the flesh by aid of the Spirit.

sertion made by men of culture in the Christian world that they have reached the summit of development where they neither have nor need a religion, only means that, renouncing Christianity, the one religion proper to our time, they hold either with the social-family-state religion, or with that of primitive heathendom, without being aware of the tendency themselves. A man without a religion — that is, without any perceptive relation to the universe — is as impossible as a man without a heart. He may be as unaware of the possession of one as of the other, but neither without a heart, nor without a religion can man exist. Religion is the relation which man acknowledges toward the universe about him, or to its source and first cause, and a reasoning man must perforce be in some sort of perceptive relationship to it.

But you may perhaps say that the invention of man's relation to the universe is a subject not for religion, but for philosophy, or, in general, for science, allowing that the latter term is more inclusive. I do not think so. I hold, on the contrary, that the supposition that science in its widest sense, including philosophy, should concern itself with the relation of man to the universe is altogether erroneous, and the chief source of disorder in the ideas of our educated society as to religion, science, and morality. Science, including philosophy, cannot institute any comparison as to the relation of mankind to the infinite universe or to its source, if only because, before any sort of science or of philosophy could have been formulated, that conception of some sort of relationship of man to the universe, without which no kind of mental activity is possible, must have existed. As a man cannot by any kind of movement discover the direction in which he must move, but all movement is made imperatively in some given direction, so it is impossible, by the mental efforts of philosophy or of science, to discover the direction in which this effort should be made; but every mental effort is inevitably accomplished in some direction which has been already given it. And this direction for all mental effort is always indicated by religion. All philosophies known to us,

from Plato to Schopenhauer, have followed inevitably the direction given by religion.

The philosophy of Plato and of his followers was a heathen system to procure the maximum of happiness, as well for the individual as for the association of individuals in the form of a state. The Church-Christian philosophy of the Middle Ages, based on the same heathen conception of existence, investigated means of salvation for the individual, — that is, the means for procuring his best advantage in a future life, — and only in its theocratic endeavors did it touch on the welfare of societies. The modern philosophy of Hegel, as well as that of Comte, is founded on the state-social-religious conception of existence. The pessimistic philosophy of Schopenhauer and Hartmann, which desired to free itself from the Jewish religious conception, became unwittingly subject to the basis of Buddhism. Philosophy always has been and always will be merely the investigation of the results of the perceptive relations of man to the universe inculcated by religion, for until this perception is acquired there is no material for philosophical investigation.

The same explanation holds good with positive science in the strict meaning of the term. Such a science always has been, and always will be, merely the investigation and determination of such objects and phenomena as appear to demand inquiry in consequence of a certain conception instituted by religion as to the relation of man to the universe. Science always has been, and always will be, not the study of "everything," as men of science at present naïvely imagine (a thing which is, moreover, impossible, as the subjects in the scope of study are of infinite quantity), but only of those things which, in order and according to their degree of importance, religion selects from the infinite objects, phenomena, and circumstances into which inquiry may be made. And hence there is not one science, but as many sciences as there are religions.

Each religion selects a certain circle of subjects which must be studied, and hence the science of every time

and nation inevitably bears the character of its religion in the point of view from which its examination is made. So the heathen science, reinstituted at the Renaissance and flourishing at present among us under the title of Christian, always has been and continues to be merely an investigation of the circumstances by which man may attain the highest welfare, and of those phenomena of the universe which may be put under contribution to the same end. The philosophical science of Brahman and Buddhist has always been merely the investigation of circumstances by which man may be delivered from the miseries which oppress him. The Jewish science (the Talmud) has always been the study and explanation of those conditions which must be observed by man in order to ratify his covenant with God, and to preserve the chosen nation at the highest level of its election. The Church-Christian science was and is the investigation of those circumstances by which man procures his salvation. The true Christian science, that which is but just at the birth, is the investigation of those circumstances by which man may become acquainted with the demands of the Supreme Will, whose instrument he is, and how he may fit them to his existence.

Neither philosophy nor science can institute man's relation to the universe, because such reciprocity must have existence before any kind of science or philosophy can begin; since each investigates phenomena by means of the intellect, and independent of the position or sensations of the investigator; whereas the relation of man to the universe is defined, not by the intellect alone, but by his sensitive perception aided by all his spiritual powers. However much one may assure and instruct a man that all real existence is an idea, that matter is made up of atoms, that the essence of life is corporality or will, that heat, light, movement, electricity are different manifestations of one and the same energy, one cannot thereby explain to a being with pains, pleasures, fears, and hopes, his position in the universe. That position and his consequent relation to the universe is explained only by

religion, which says, "The universe exists for thee, and therefore take from life all that thou canst obtain;" or else, "Thou art one of the chosen people of God; serve that people, and accomplish the instructions of that God, and thou and thy people shall be partakers of the highest bliss;" or else, "Thou art the instrument of a supreme will, which has sent thee into the universe to accomplish a work predestined for thee; learn that will, and do it, for that is the sole perfection thou canst achieve."

To understand philosophy and science one needs study and preparation, but neither is required for the understanding of religion; that is at once comprehensible to every man whatever his ignorance and limitations. A man need acquire neither philosophy nor science to understand his relation to the universe, or to its source; a superfluity of knowledge, encumbering his consciousness, is rather an impediment; but he must renounce, if only for the time, the vanity of the world, and acquire a sense of his material frailty and of truth, which are, as the Gospels tell us, to be found most often in children and in the simplest, most unlearned, of men. For this reason we see the most simple, ignorant, and untaught men accept clearly, consciously, and easily the highest Christian conception of life, whereas the most learned and cultured linger in crude heathenism. As, for example, we observe men of refinement and education whose conception of existence is the acquirement of personal pleasure or security from pain, as with the shrewd and cultured Schopenhauer, or in the salvation of the soul by sacraments and means of grace, as with learned bishops of the Church; whereas an almost illiterate sectarian peasant in Russia, without the slightest mental effort, achieves the same conception of life as was accomplished by the greatest sages of the world — Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius, Seneca — namely, the consciousness of one's being as the instrument of the will of God — the son of God.

But you may ask me: In what, then, does the

essence of this unscientific and unphilosophical knowledge consist? If it be neither scientific nor philosophical, of what sort is it? How is it to be defined?

To these questions I can only reply that as religious knowledge is that which precedes, and upon which is founded, every other knowledge, it cannot be defined, there being no essential term of definition in existence. In theological language this knowledge is called revelation. And this word, if we do not give it any mystic meaning, is quite accurate; because this knowledge is not acquired by study, or by the efforts of individuals, but through the reception by them of the manifestation of the Infinite Mind, which, little by little, discloses itself to men. Why is it that ten thousand years ago men were unable to understand that their sentient existence was not exhausted by the welfare of the individual, and that later came a time when the higher family-social-state-national conception of life was disclosed to mankind? Why is it that, within the limits of historical memory, the Christian conception of life has been disclosed to men? And why has it been disclosed to such a man or men, and precisely at such a time, at such and no other place, in such and no other form?

To try to answer these questions by searching for their reasons in the historical circumstances of the time, life, and character and special qualities of those men who first accepted and expressed this conception of life, is as if one were to try to prove why the rising sun first casts his rays on certain objects. The sun of truth, rising higher and higher upon the world, enlightens it ever further, and is reflected by those forms on which first fall the illumination of its rays and which are most capable of reflecting them. The qualities which give to some the power of receiving the rising truth are no special activities of the mind, but rather passive qualities of the heart, seldom corresponding to a great and inquisitive intellect. Rejection of the vanities of the world, a sense of one's material frailty, truthfulness, are what we observe in every

founder of a religion, none of whom have been distinguished by philosophical or scientific acquirement.

In my opinion the chief error, which, more than all else, impedes the true progress of Christian humanity, is precisely the fact that the scientific men of our time, who are now in the seat of the teachers, being guided by the heathen conception of life revived at the Renaissance, and having accepted as the essence of Christianity its crudest distortions, and having decided that it is a condition already outworn by mankind (while they consider, on the contrary, that the ancient social-state conception of heathendom, which is indeed outworn, is the loftiest conception and one that should steadfastly be held by humanity), these men, not only do not understand true Christianity, which comprises that most perfect conception of life toward which all humanity is advancing, but they do not even try to understand it.

The chief source of this misunderstanding arises from the fact that men of science, having diverged from Christianity, and seen that their science cannot conform to it, have agreed that Christianity and not science must be at fault; that is, they have assumed, not the fact that science is eighteen hundred years behind Christianity, which embraced the greater part of contemporary society, but that it is Christianity which is eighteen hundred years in arrears. From this distortion of facts arises the curious circumstance that no people have more entangled ideas as to the essence of true knowledge, religion, morality, and existence than men of science, and the still more curious fact that the science of our time, despite all its successes in examining the phenomena of the material world, appears to be, as to human existence, either unnecessary or productive of merely pernicious results. And hence I hold that it is neither philosophy nor science which can explain the relation of man to the universe, but religion.

And so I answer your first question, as to what I understand by the word "religion," thus: Religion is the conception by man of the relation between him-

self and the eternal, infinite universe, its origin and source.

Out of this reply to your first question follows naturally that to the second.

If religion is the conception by man of his relation to the universe, the determining idea of his life, morality is the index and explanation of man's activity which naturally flows from this or the other relation to the universe. And as we recognize only two of these fundamental relations to the universe or its first cause, if we include the heathen-social as the enlargement of the personal relation, or three if we consider it apart, so there exist but three moral teachings: the primitive, savage, individualistic; the heathen-family-state or social; and the Christian or divine, teaching man's subservience to the universe or to God.

From the first conception of man's relationship to the universe proceeds the morality common to all heathen religions, and having for its foundation the welfare of the individual, and, therefore, defining every condition capable of producing that welfare and the means by which it may be procured. From this idea of man's relationship to the universe have proceeded various moral teachings: the Epicurean in its lowest manifestation; the Mohammedan, promising the individual gross pleasures in this and the next world; the Church-Christian, with salvation for its object — that is, the welfare of the individual in the world to come; and the utilitarian, having for its object the welfare of the individual in this world alone. From this same conception, which proclaims the welfare of the individual, and hence his immunity from pain, as the object of his existence, proceed the Buddhist morality in its crudest aspect and the teaching of the pessimists.

From the second conception, which proclaims the welfare of a certain association of individuals as the object of existence, proceed those moral teachings which demand from mankind subservience to that particular association the welfare of which is accepted as the aim of life. According to this morality, such amount of per-

sonal welfare is alone permitted as may be procurable for the entire association which forms the religious base of existence. From this conception of man's relation to the universe proceed such moral teachings of the Greek and Roman world as are known to us, in which the individual is always sacrificed to society; the moral teaching of China; the Jewish morality of personal subjection to the welfare of the chosen people; and the Church-State-moral teaching of our own time which demands the sacrifice of the individual to the welfare of the State. From this same conception proceeds also the morality of the majority of women, sacrificing their individuality to the welfare of the family, and especially of their children.

All ancient history, and in part that of the Middle Ages, and of the modern era, is full of the exploits of this family, social, and state morality. And, at the present time, most men only imagine they profess Christianity and hold the Christian morality, but in reality they follow this family-state morality of heathendom. And this morality they elevate into an ideal in the education of the young.

From the third conception of man's relation to the universe — namely, the acknowledgment by man of his existence as an instrument of the Supreme Will for the accomplishment of its designs — proceeds the morality corresponding to this conception, which explains the dependence of man on the Supreme Will, and determines the demands of this Will. From this conception proceed the loftiest moral teachings known to man — the Pythagorean, Stoic, Buddhist, Brahman, and Taoist, in their best aspects, and the Christian teaching in its real sense, which demands the renunciation of the individual will, and of the welfare, not only of the individual, but of family, society, and state, in the name of the fulfilment of the will of Him who sent us into life and made it known to us through our consciousness.

From the second or third of these perceptions of man's relationship to the infinite universe or its first cause, proceeds the true, sincere morality of every man, in spite

of what he nominally professes or preaches as morality, or what he desires to appear. So that a man who acknowledges that the essence of his relation to the universe consists in the acquirement of the greatest welfare for himself, however much he may prate of the morality of living for family, society, state, humanity, or the accomplishment of the will of God (though he may be clever enough by feigning to deceive his fellows), the real motive of his activity will always be his own welfare; so that, when necessity for choice arises, he will sacrifice, not himself for his family, nation, or the accomplishment of God's will, but everything for himself, because his conception of existence being centered in his own welfare, he cannot act otherwise till the conception of his relation to the universe undergoes a change.

In the same way, however much a man, whose conception of his relation to the universe consists in the service of his family (as is the case with most women), tribe, country, or nation (as those of oppressed nationalities, or political agents in times of contention), may say that he is a Christian, his morality will always remain a family, national, or state morality, not a Christian; and when the necessity arises for choosing between the welfare of family or of society and that of himself, or between social welfare and the accomplishment of God's will, he will inevitably choose to serve the welfare of that association of his fellows for which he, according to his conception of life, exists; because only in such service does he discover the meaning of his existence.

And, similarly, however much you may assure a man, who considers that his relation to the universe consists in the accomplishment of the will of Him that sent him, that he must, in the interest of person, family, state, nation, or humanity, do that which contradicts this superior will, of which he is conscious through the reason and love with which he is equipped, he will always sacrifice person, family, country, or humanity rather than be unfaithful to the will of Him that sent him, because only by the accomplishment of this will does he realize his conception of life.

Morality cannot be independent of religion, because, not only is it the outcome of religion, — that is, of that conception by man of his relation to the universe, — but because it is already implied by religion. All religion is a reply to the question, What is my conception of life? And the religious answer always includes a certain moral demand, which may sometimes follow the explanation of this conception, sometimes precede it. The question may be answered thus: The conception of life is the welfare of the individual, therefore profit by every advantage accessible to thee; or, The conception of life is the welfare of an association, serve therefore that association with all thy power; or, The conception of life is the fulfilment of the will of Him that sent thee, therefore try, with all thy power, to learn that will and to do it. And the same question may be answered thus: The conception of life is thy personal pleasure, in that is the true destiny of man; or, The conception of life is the service of that association of which thou considerest thyself a member, for that is thy destiny; or, The conception of life is the service of God, since for that thou hast been made.

Morality is included in the explanation of life that religion offers us, and therefore cannot possibly be divorced from it. This truth is especially prominent in those attempts of non-Christian philosophers to deduce the inculcation of the loftiest morality from their philosophy. These teachers see that Christian morality is indispensable; that existence without it is impossible; more, they see that such a morality does exist, and they desire in some manner to attach it to their non-Christian philosophy, and even so to represent things that it may appear as if Christian morality were the natural outcome of their heathen or social philosophy. And they make the attempt, but their very efforts exhibit more clearly than anything else, not only the independence of Christian morality, but its complete contradiction of the philosophy of individual welfare, of escape from personal suffering, of the welfare of society.

Christian ethics, that system of which we become con-

scious by a religious conception of life, demand not only the sacrifice of personality to society, but of one's own person and any aggregation of persons to the service of God. Whereas heathen philosophy, investigating the means by which the welfare of the individual or of an association of individuals may be achieved, inevitably contradicts the Christian ideal. Heathen philosophy has but one method for concealing this discrepancy: it heaps up abstract conditional ideas, one upon the other, and refuses to emerge from the misty region of metaphysics. Chiefly after this manner was the behavior of the philosophers of the Renaissance, and to this circumstance — namely, the impossibility of reconciling the demands of Christian morality already recognized as existing, with philosophy upon a heathen basis — one must attribute that dreary abstraction, incomprehensibility, estrangement from life, and want of charity of the new philosophy. With the exception of Spinoza, whose philosophy proceeded from a religious and truly Christian basis, although he is not commonly reckoned a Christian, and of Kant, a gifted genius who resolutely conducted his ethics independently of his metaphysics; with these two exceptions, every other philosopher, even the brilliant Schopenhauer, manifestly devised artificial connections between their ethics and their metaphysics.

One feels that the system of Christian ethics has an original and firmly established standpoint independent of philosophy, and needing not at all the fictitious props placed beneath it, and that philosophy invents such statements not only to avoid an appearance of contradiction, but apparently to involve a natural connection and outcome.

But all these statements seem to justify Christian ethics only while they are considered in the abstract. The moment they are fitted to questions of practical existence, then not only does their disagreement become visible in all its force, but the contradiction between the philosopical basis and that which we regard as morality is made manifest. The unhappy Nietzsche, who has lately become so celebrated, is especially noticeable as

an example of this contradiction. He is irrefutable when he says that all rules of morality, from the standpoint of the existent non-Christian philosophy, are nothing but falsehood and hypocrisy, and that it is much more advantageous, pleasant, and reasonable for a man to be a member of the society of *Uebermenschen*, than to be one of a crowd which must serve as a scaffold for that society. No combinations of a philosophy which proceeds from the heathen-religious conception of life can prove to a man that it will be more advantageous and more reasonable for him to live, not for his own desired, attainable, and conceivable welfare, or for the welfare of his family and society, but for another's welfare, which, as far as he is concerned, may be undesirable, inconceivable, and unattainable by insufficient human means. That philosophy which is founded on man's welfare as the ideal of existence can never prove to reasoning beings, with the ever-present consciousness of death, that it is fitting for him to renounce his own desirable, conceivable, and certain welfare, not for the certain welfare of others — for he can never know the results of his sacrifice — but merely because it is right that he should do so; that it is the categorical imperative.

It is impossible to prove this from the heathen-philosophical standpoint. In order to prove that men are all equal, that it is better for a man to sacrifice his own life in the service of others, than to make his fellows serve him, trampling upon their lives, it is necessary for a man to determine his relation to the universe in some other way; it must be shown that the position of a man is such that he is left no other course, because the meaning of his life is to be found only in the accomplishment of the will of Him that sent him, and that the will of Him that sent him is — that he should give his life to the service of mankind. And such a modification in man's perception of his relation to the universe is wrought only by religion.

So, too, is it with the attempt to deduce Christian morality from, and to harmonize it with, the fundamen-

tal propositions of heathen science. No sophisms or mental subterfuges will destroy the simple and clear proposition, that the law of evolution, laid as the basis of all the science of our time, is founded upon a general, unchangeable, and eternal law, — that of the struggle for existence, and of the survival of the "fittest," — and that, therefore, every man, for the attainment of his own welfare, or of that of his society, must be this fittest,[1] or make his society the fittest in order that neither he nor his society should perish, but another less fit. However much some naturalists, alarmed by the logical inferences of this law, and by its adaptation to human existence, may strive to extinguish it with words and talk it down, its irrefutability becomes only the more manifest by their efforts, and its control over the life of the entire organic world, and hence over that of man, regarded as an animal.

While I am writing this, the Russian translation of an article by Professor Huxley has been published, consisting of an address which he delivered not long ago before a certain English society on evolution and ethics.

In this article the learned professor — as did some years ago, too, our eminent Professor Beketof as unsuccessfully as his predecessors — tries to prove that the struggle for existence does not violate morality, and that, alongside the acceptance of the law of this struggle for existence, as the fundamental law of life, morality may not only exist, but may improve. Mr. Huxley's article is full of all kinds of jokes, verses, and general views upon the religion and philosophy of the ancients, and therefore is so shock-headed and entangled that only with great pains can one arrive at the fundamental idea.

This, however, is as follows: The law of evolution is contrary to the law of morality; this was known to the ancient world of Greece and India. And the philosophy and religion of both nations led them to the teaching of self-abnegation. This teaching, according to the author's opinion, is not correct; but the right one is the following: a law exists, termed by the author "the

[1] English in the original.

cosmic law," [1] according to which all creatures struggle amongst themselves, and only the fittest survives. Man is subordinate to this law, and, thanks to it, has become what he now is. But this law is contrary to morality. How, then, are we to reconcile morality with this law? Thus: Social progress exists which tends to suspend the cosmic process, and to replace it by another — an ethical one, the object of which is no longer the survival of the "fittest," but of the "best" in the ethical sense.

Whence this ethical process came Mr. Huxley does not explain, but in Note 19 he says that the basis of this process consists in the fact that men, as well as animals, prefer, on the one hand, to live in a society, and therefore smother within themselves such propensities as are pernicious to societies, and, on the other hand, the members of societies crush by force such actions as are prejudicial to the welfare of the society. Mr. Huxley thinks that this process, which compels men to control their passions for the preservation of that association to which they belong, and the fear of punishment should they break the rules of that association, compose that very ethical law the existence of which it behooves him to prove.

It evidently appears to Mr. Huxley, in the innocence of his mind, that in English society of our time, with its Irish destitution, its insane luxury of the rich, its trade in opium and spirits, its executions, its sanguinary wars, its extermination of entire nations for the sake of commerce and policy, its secret vice and hypocrisy — it appears to him that a man who does not overstep police regulations is a moral man, and that such a man is guided by an ethical process. Mr. Huxley seems to forget that those personal qualities which may be needful to prevent the destruction of that society in which its member lives, may be of service to the

[1] Delivered in 1893 before the University of Oxford as the second of the annual courses of lectures founded by the late G. J. Romanes, one condition being that there should be no discussion of religion or politics. The article with Prolegomena is the first in the volume to which it gives its name — "Evolution and Ethics" — published by Macmillan in 1894. — Ed.

society itself: and that the personal qualities of the members of a band of brigands are also useful to the band; as, also, in our society, we find a use for hangmen, jailers, judges, soldiers, false-pastors, etc., but that the qualities of these men have nothing in common with morality.

Morality is an affair of constant development and growth, and hence the preservation of the instituted orders of a certain society, by means of the rope and scaffold, to which as instruments of morality Mr. Huxley alludes, will be not only not the confirmation, but the infraction of morality. And on the contrary, every infringement of existing canons, such as was the violation by Christ and His disciples of the ordinances of a Roman province, such as would be the defiance of existing regulations by a man who refuses to take part in judgments at law, military service, and payment of taxes to be used for military preparations, will be not only not contrary to morality, but the indispensable condition of its manifestation. Every cannibal who ceases to eat his own kind acts in the same manner and transgresses the ordinances of his society. Hence, though actions which infringe the regulations of society may be immoral, without doubt, also, every truly moral action which advances the cause of morality is always achieved by transgressing some ordinance of society.

And, therefore, if there has ever appeared in a society a law which demands the sacrifice of personal advantage to preserve the unity of the whole social fabric, that law is not an ethical statute, but for the most part, on the contrary (being opposed to all ethics), is that same law of struggle for existence in a latent and concealed form. It is the same struggle, but transferred from units to their agglomerations. It is not the cessation of strife, but the swinging backward of the arm to hit the harder.

If the law of the struggle for existence and survival of the fittest is the eternal law of all life (and one must perforce regard it as such with reference to man considered as an animal), then such misty arguments as to

social progress — and an ethical law supposed to proceed from it, like a *deus ex machina*, coming none knows whence, to assist us in our need — cannot break that law down.

If social progress, as Mr. Huxley assures us, collects men into groups, then the same struggle and the same survival will exist between families, races, and states, and this struggle will be, not only not more moral, but more cruel and immoral than that between individuals, as, indeed, we find it in reality.

Even if we admit the impossible — that all humanity, solely by social progress, will in a thousand years achieve a single unity and will constitute one state and nation, even then, not to mention that the struggle suppressed between states and nations will be altered to one between humanity and the animal world, and that that struggle will always remain a struggle, — that is, an activity absolutely excluding the possibility of Christian morality as professed by us, — not to speak of this, even then the struggle between the individuals which compose this unity, and between the associations of families, races, nationalities will not in the least be diminished, but will continue the same, only in another form, as we may observe in all associations of men in families, races, and states. Those of one family quarrel and fight among themselves, just as strangers do — and often even more cruelly. So also in a state, the same struggle continues between those within it, as between them and those without, only in other forms. In one case men kill one another with arrows and knives, in another by starvation. And if the feeblest are sometimes preserved in the family or state, it is in no wise thanks to the state association, but because self-abnegation and tenderness exist among people joined in families and states.

If, of two orphan children, only the fittest survives, whereas both might live with the help of a good mother, this fact will not be in consequence of family unification, but because a certain mother is gifted with tenderness and self-denial. And neither of these gifts can proceed from social progress.

To assert that social progress produces morality is equivalent to saying that the erection of stoves produces heat. Heat proceeds from the sun; and stoves produce heat only when fuel — the work of the sun — is kindled in them; so morality proceeds from religion, and social forms of life produce morality only when into these forms are put the results of religious influence on humanity — that is, morality. Stoves may be kindled, and so may impart heat, or may be left fireless and so remain cold.

So, too, social forms may include morality, and in that case morally influence society, or may not include morality, and thus remain without influence. Christian morality cannot be founded on the heathen or social conception of life, nor can it be deduced either from non-Christian philosophy or science — cannot only not be deduced, but cannot be reconciled with them. So has it always been understood by every serious, consistent philosophy and science.

"Do our propositions disagree with morality? Well, then, so much the worse for morality," said such a philosophy and science with perfect correctness, and continued their investigations.

Ethical treatises, not founded on religion, and even lay catechisms, are written and used, and men may believe that humanity is guided by them; but it only seems to be so, because people in reality are guided, not by these treatises and catechisms, but by the religion which they have always had and have; whereas the treatises and catechisms are only counterfeits, bearing the seal of religion.

Ordinances of lay morality not founded upon religious teaching are similar to the actions of a man who, being ignorant of music, should take the conductor's seat before the orchestra, and begin to wave his arms before the musicians who are performing. The music might continue a little while by its own momentum, and from the previous knowledge of the players; but it is evident that the mere waving of a stick by a man who is ignorant of music would be not only useless, but would inevitably confuse the musicians and in the end disorganize the

orchestra. The same disorder is beginning to take place in the minds of the men of our time, in consequence of the attempts of leading men to teach people morality, not founded on that loftiest religion which is in process of adoption, and is in part adopted by Christian humanity. It would be, indeed, desirable to have a moral teaching unmixed with superstition, but the fact is that moral teaching is only the result of a certain perceived relation of man to the universe, or to God. If the perception of such a relation is expressed in forms which seem to us superstitious, then, in order to prevent this, we should try to express this relation more clearly, reasonably, and accurately, and even to destroy the former perception of man's relationship which has become insufficient, and to put in its place one loftier, clearer, and more reasonable; but by no means to invent a so-called lay, irreligious morality, founded on sophisms or upon nothing at all.

The attempts to inculcate morality independent of religion are like the actions of children when, wishing to move a plant which pleases them, they tear off the root which does not please, and seems unnecessary to them, and plant it in the earth without the root. Without a religious foundation there can be no true, sincere morality, as without a root there can be no true plant.

Thus, in reply to your two questions, I say religion is the conception by man of his relationship to the infinite universe, or to its source. And morality is the ever-present guide of life proceeding only from this relationship.

1894.

TWO LETTERS ON HENRY GEORGE

I

IN reply to your letter[1] I send you the enclosed with special pleasure. I have been acquainted with Henry George since the appearance of his "Social Problems." I read that book, and was struck by the correctness of his main idea, and by the unique clearness and power of his argument, which is unlike anything in scientific literature, and especially by the Christian spirit which pervades the book, making it also stand alone in the literature of science. After reading it I turned to his previous work, "Progress and Poverty," and with a heightened appreciation of its author's activity. You ask my opinion of Henry George's work, and of his single tax system. My opinion is the following: —

Humanity advances continually toward the enlightenment of its consciousness,[2] and to the institution of modes of life corresponding to this consciousness, which is in process of enlightenment. Hence in every period of life and humanity there is, on the one hand, a progressive enlightenment of consciousness, and on the other a realization in life of what is enlightened by the consciousness. At the close of the last century and the beginning of this, a progressive enlightenment of con-

[1] Written in answer to a German, occupied in spreading the ideas and system of Henry George in his own country, who wrote to ask Tolstoï what views he held concerning such an activity.

[2] The Russian word *soznaniye* signifies both "consciousness" and "conscience," and as in these paragraphs seems to vibrate between the two concepts. — Ed.

sciousness occurred in Christianized humanity with respect to the working-classes, who were previously in various phases of slavery; and a progressive realization of new forms of life — the abolition of slavery and the substitution of free hired labor.

At the present day a progressive enlightenment of human consciousness is taking place with reference to the use of land, and soon, it seems to me, a progressive realization in life of this consciousness must follow. And in this progressive enlightenment of consciousness with reference to the use of land, and in the realization of this consciousness, which constitutes one of the chief problems of our time, the fore-man, the leader of the movement, was and is Henry George. In this lies his immense and predominant importance. He has contributed by his excellent books both to the enlightenment of the consciousness of mankind with reference to this question, and to placing it on a practical footing.

But with the abolition of the revolting right of ownership in land, the same thing is being repeated which took place, as we can still remember, when slavery was abolished. The government and ruling classes, knowing that the advantages and authority of their position amongst men are bound up in the land question, while pretending that they are preoccupied with the welfare of the people, organizing working-men's banks, inspection of labor, income taxes, and even an eight hours' day, studiously ignore the land question, and even, with the aid of an obliging and easily corrupted science, assert that the expropriation of land is useless, harmful, impossible.

The same thing is happening now as in the days of the slave trade. Mankind, at the beginning of the present and at the end of the last century, had long felt that slavery was an awful, soul-nauseating anachronism; but sham religion and sham science proved that there was nothing wrong in it, that it was indispensable, or, at least, that its abolition would be premature. To-day something similar is taking place with reference to property in land. In the same way sham religion and

sham science are proving that there is nothing wrong in landed property, and no need to abolish it. One might think it would be palpable to every educated man of our time that the exclusive control of land by people who do not work upon it, and who prevent hundreds and thousands of distressed families making use of it, is an action every whit as wicked and base as the possession of slaves; yet we see aristocrats, supposed to be educated and refined, English, Austrian, Prussian, Russian, who profit by this base and cruel right, and who are not only not ashamed, but proud of it.

Religion blesses such possession, and the science of political economy proves that it must exist for the greatest welfare of mankind. It is Henry George's merit that he not only exploded all the sophism whereby religion and science justify landed property, and pressed the question to the furthest proof, which forced all who had not stopped their ears to acknowledge the unlawfulness of ownership in land, but also that he was the first to indicate a possible solution to the question. He was the first to give a simple, straightforward answer to the usual excuses made by the enemies of all progress, which affirm that the demands of progress are illusions, impracticable, inapplicable.

The method of Henry George destroys this excuse by so putting the question that to-morrow committees might be appointed to examine and deliberate on his scheme and its transformation into law. In Russia, for instance, the inquiry as to the means for the ransom of land, or its gratuitous confiscation for nationalization, might be begun to-morrow, and solved, with certain restrictions, as thirty-three years ago the question of liberating the peasants was solved. To humanity the indispensableness of this reform is demonstrated, and its feasibleness is proved (emendations, alterations in the single tax system may be required, but the fundamental idea is a possibility); and therefore humanity cannot but do that which reason demands. For this idea to become public opinion it is only necessary that

it should be spread and explained precisely as you are doing, in which work I sympathize with you with all my heart, and wish you success.

II [1]

The scheme of Henry George is as follows: The advantage and profit from the use of land is not everywhere the same; since the more fertile, convenient portions, adjoining populous districts, will always attract many who wish to possess them; and in proportion as these portions are better and more suitable they ought to be appraised more highly: the better, dearer; the worse, cheaper; the worst, cheapest of all.

So that the land which attracts but few should not be appraised at all, but left without payment to those who are willing to cultivate it by their own manual labor. According to such a valuation, good plowland in the government of Tula, for example, would be valued at about five or six rubles the desyatin;[2] market garden land near villages at ten rubles; the same, but watered by spring floods, fifteen rubles, and so on. In towns the valuation would be from one hundred to five hundred rubles the desyatin; and in Moscow and Petersburg, in go-ahead places, and about the harbors of navigable rivers, several thousands or tens of thousands of rubles the desyatin.

When all the land in the country has been thus appraised, Henry George proposes to pass a law declaring that all the land, from such a year and date, shall belong no longer to any separate individual, but to the whole country, to the whole nation; and that thereafter every one who possesses land must pay to the State, that is, to the whole nation, the rent at which it has been appraised.

This payment must be expended on all the public needs of the State, so that it will take the place of every

[1] Written to a Russian peasant living in Siberia.
[2] A desyatin is 2.7 acres.

kind of monetary imposition, both interior and exterior — the custom-house.

According to this scheme it would follow that a landowner, who was at present in possession of two thousand desyatins, would continue to own them, but would have to pay for them into the treasury, here in Tula, between twelve and fifteen thousand rubles a year, because hereabouts the best land for agricultural and building purposes would be included; and as no large landowner would be able to bear the strain of such a payment, he would be obliged to give up the land. Whereas our Tula peasant would have to pay about two rubles less for each desyatin of the same ground than he does at present, would always have available land around him which he could hire for five or six rubles, and in addition, would not only have no other taxes to pay, but would get untaxed all Russian and foreign articles which he needs. In towns the owners of houses and manufactories can continue to possess their property, but will have to pay into the common treasury for the land they occupy, according to its valuation.

The advantage of such a system will be: —

(1) That no one will be unable to obtain land for use.

(2) That there will cease to be idle men possessing land, and forcing others to work for them, in return for the use of the land.

(3) That the land will be in the hands of those who work it, and not of those who do not.

(4) That the people, being able to work on the land, will cease to enslave themselves as laborers in factories, and manufactories, and as servants in towns; and will be scattered about the country.

(5) That there will be no longer any overseers and tax-collectors in factories, manufactories, stores, and custom-houses, but only collectors of payment for the land, which it is impossible to steal, and from which taxes may be most easily collected.

(6 and chiefly) That those who do not labor will be freed from the sin of profiting by the labors of others (in doing which they are often not to blame, being from

childhood educated in idleness, and not knowing how to work), and from the still greater sin of every kind of falsehood and excuse to shift the blame from themselves; and that those who do labor will be delivered from the temptation and sin of envy, condemnation of others, and exasperation against those who do not work; and thus one of the causes of dissension between man and man will disappear.

MANUAL LABOR AN INTELLECTUAL ACTIVITY

FROM A PRIVATE LETTER[1]

YOU ask me why manual labor presents itself to us as one of the unavoidable conditions of true happiness. Is it necessary voluntarily to deprive ourselves of intellectual activity in the domain of science and art, which seems to us incompatible with manual labor?

I have never regarded manual labor as a special principle, but as a very simple and natural application of moral bases — an application which before all is presented to every sincere man.

In our perverted society — in the society called civilized — we need, above all things, to speak of manual labor, because the chief fault of our society has been, and up to the present time still is, the striving to rid ourselves of manual labor, and without mutual concessions to profit by the labor of the poor, uneducated, and indigent classes who are in a state of slavery akin to that which obtained in antiquity.

The first indication of sincerity on the part of the people of our class, professing Christian, philosophical or humanitarian principles, is the endeavor, as far as possible, to avoid this injustice. The simplest and most available means of attaining this is manual labor, which begins with each man attending to his own wants.

I never believe in the sincerity of the philosophical and moral principles of a man who compels a servant girl to wait on him.[2]

[1] Entitled, "Letter to a Frenchman" in the Geneva edition which contains several paragraphs not in the Moscow edition.

[2] Not in Moscow edition.

The simplest and shortest rule of morality consists in a man compelling as little service as possible from others, and serving other men as much as possible, — in demanding as little as possible from others, and in giving others as much as possible. This rule, imparting to our existence a reasonable meaning and blessing, as its consequence resolves simultaneously all difficulties equally with that which presents itself to you. This rule points out the place which ought to be occupied by intellectual activity, by science and art. Following this rule I am happy and satisfied only when I am indubitably convinced that my activity is advantageous to others.

The satisfaction of those for whom I am working is already a superfluity, an excess of happiness, on which I do not reckon, and which can have no influence on my actions.

My firm belief that what I am doing is advantageous and not harmful, but is good for others — this conviction is the chief condition of my happiness. And precisely this causes a sincere and moral man involuntarily to prefer manual labor to scientific or artistic work.

For the advantage of my literary labors the work of compositors is required; for the completion of my symphony I need the coöperation of musicians; for the production of my experiments I require the help of those who make apparatus and instruments for our laboratories; for the pictures which I paint, I depend on men who prepare colors and canvas; and meantime the works which I am producing may be useful for men, or — as happens in the majority of cases — may be perfectly useless and even injurious.

How can I occupy myself with actions, the use of which is entirely dubious, and for the accomplishment of which I must compel others to labor — when in front of me, around me, is an infinite number of things all of which are indubitably useful for others, and for the production of which I need depend on no one? For example, to carry a burden for one for whom it is too heavy, to plow a field for a sick farmer, to bind up a wound, and the like, not to speak of the thousands of things sur-

rounding us, for the production of which extraneous help is not needed and which give immediate satisfaction to those for whom you produce them, and besides these there are a host of other actions: for example, to plant a tree, to raise a calf, to clean out a well — and all these things are unquestionably useful, and a sincere man cannot help preferring them to actions which require the labor of others, and are at the same time of doubtful utility.

The calling of a prophet, of a teacher, is elevated and noble. But we know the good of priests who consider themselves the only teachers, because they have the opportunity of forcing themselves to be considered such.[1] Yet not the teacher that receives the education and training of a teacher, but the one that has an inner conviction of what he is, ought to be and can be anything else. This condition is rarely met with, and can be proved only by the sacrifices which the man makes for his calling.

The same is true both for true science and true art. The violinist Lulli, at the peril of his life, escaped from the kitchen to the attic in order to play on his violin, and by this sacrifice he proved the truth of his calling. But for a conservatory teacher, a student, whose only obligation is to accomplish the task set before them, it is impossible to prove the truth of their calling. They only take advantage of the position which presents itself to them as favorable.

Manual labor is a duty and happiness for all; the activity of the mind and of the imagination is an exclusive activity; it is a duty and pleasure only for those that are called to it. The calling may be recognized and shown only by the sacrifice which the savant or the artist makes of his ease and well-being in order to devote himself to his calling. A man who continues to fulfil his obligation, — the subjugation of his life to the work of his hands, — and, notwithstanding this, takes hours from his rest and his sleep in order to produce something in the domain of intellect and imagination, proves thereby that he is called to it, and produces in

[1] This sentence not in Moscow edition, nor the word *prorok* (prophet).

his own domain something useful to men. He who holds aloof from the universal moral obligation, and, under the pretext of a special bent to science or art, arranges for himself the life of a sluggard — such a man merely produces a false science and a false art.

The fruits of true science and true art are the fruits of sacrifice, but are not the fruits of certain material advantages.

But what then will become of science and art?

How often have I heard this question from men not at all interested in science or in art, and not having the slightest comprehension of what science and art are. It would seem that nearer than anything else to the heart of these men was the good of humanity, which, according to their conviction, could not be attained in any other way except by the development of what they call science and art.

But what a strange thing to defend the usefulness of the useful! Can there be people so foolish as to deny the usefulness of that which is useful? And furthermore, can there be people so foolish as to consider it their duty to defend the usefulness of the useful?

There are workingmen who are artisans; there are workingmen-farmers. No one ever made up his mind to deny their usefulness. And never will a workman need to prove the usefulness of his labor. He produces, and what he produces is essential and is good for others. They make use of it, and no one doubts its usefulness, and what is more, no one proves it. The laborers in art and science are in the same position. Why are people found compelling themselves to prove their usefulness?

The reason is that true laborers in science and art do not trouble themselves about their rights; they give the productions of their labors. These productions are useful, and they do not need rights and the ratification of them.

But the great majority of those that consider themselves scientists and artists know very well that what they produce is not worth what they expend. And they employ all possible means to prove that their activity is

essential for the well-being of humanity. True sciences and arts have always existed and always will exist, like all other branches of human activity, and it is impossible and idle to deny or defend them.

The false position which is occupied in our society by science and art merely proves that men calling themselves civilized, with scientists and artists at their head, constitute a caste with all the vices characteristic of every caste. They bring down from its height and diminish the principle in the name of which the caste is composed. They lay a heavy burden on the people, and, moreover, shut off the light, idly striving to prove that they are disseminating it. And what is worse than all, their acts always contradict the principles which they preach.

Not counting those that uphold an insufficient principle — science for science's sake, art for art's sake — they are all required to prove that science and art are essential, because they subserve the weal of mankind.

But in what consists this weal? By what signs can the weal be separated from the evil? The partizans of science and art dodge this question. They even suppose that a definition of well-being — *blago* — is impossible, and is outside of science and outside of art. Well-being in general, they say, is goodness, is beauty, but cannot be defined.

But they lie.

In all times humanity has only accomplished in its onward march that which has determined the good and the beautiful. Goodness and beauty were determined a thousand years ago. But this definition was insufficient for them, for the priests, — it displayed their emptiness and the perniciousness of what they called science and art opposed to goodness and beauty. The Brahmin, the Buddhist, and Chinese sages, the Hebrews, Egyptians, the Greek stoics defined good in the same accurate way. Everything that promotes unity among men is goodness and beauty; everything that separates them is evil and ugly. All men know this definition — it is imprinted in our hearts.

Goodness and beauty for humanity is what unites men. Thus if the partizans of science and art actually have in view the good of humanity, they ought to advance only such sciences and such arts as lead to these ends; and if this were so, there would not be so many sciences, the aim of which is the advantage only of a few societies and the injury of others. If good were actually the aim of arts and sciences, never would the investigations of the positive sciences, since they often have no relation to the true advantage of mankind, attain such an inexplicable importance. The same may be said of the productions of art, which are suitable only as an excitement for depraved old men, and the pastime of idle people.

Human wisdom is not wholly included in the number of the sciences. There is an infinite quantity of things which we cannot know. Wisdom does not consist in knowing as much as possible. Human wisdom consists in a knowledge of the order in which it is profitable to know things; wisdom consists in the knowledge of what is most important, and what is least important to know. Of all the sciences needful for men, the chief one is the knowledge of how to live, doing as little harm as possible; and of all arts, the most important is that which teaches how to avoid evil, and how to produce good with the least violence.

And now it has come about that among all the arts and sciences which claim to advance the good of humanity, those first in importance not only do not exist in reality, but are even excluded from the list of arts and sciences.

What in our society is called science and art, is only a monstrous soap-bubble, a superstition into which we usually fall as soon as we free ourselves from other superstitions.[1] In order clearly to see the route by which we must go, we must turn back to the very beginning, we must take off the cowl which keeps our heads warm but prevents us from looking up. The temptation is great.

[1] From "The Superstitions of the Church." Geneva edition.

If we are not placed in this position by birth, we strive, by cleverness or hard work, to mount the highest rounds of the social ladder to the privileged social position of the priests of civilization, and we need much candor and much love of truth and goodness to question the principles that condition such a lofty position.

But for a serious man who tries to settle the question of life there is no choice: in order for him to begin to see clearly he must free himself from superstition, even though it may be to his advantage.[1]

This condition is a *sine qua non.*

It is unprofitable to quarrel with a man as to what he takes for his faith. If the field of thought is not perfectly free, one can indulge in long disputes, long criticisms, and never move one iota toward the knowledge of truth. Every reasonable opinion meets with shipwreck on preëstablished positions.

There is a religious faith and there is a faith in the progress of civilization. They are absolutely alike. The Catholic says to himself: I can think except in the domain of the Holy Scriptures and Tradition which govern the truth in its fulness and unchangeability. The believer in civilization says: My opinion stops before the two bases of civilization — science and art. Our science, he says, is the association of the true knowledge of man; if at the present time it does not command the full truth, in time to come it will do so. Our art, together with classic art, is the only true art.

Religious superstitions say: Outside of man exists the *Ding an sich* — the absolute — as the Germans say — that is the Church.

Men of our society say: Outside of man civilization exists in itself.

It is easy for us to see the lack of logic in religious superstitions because we do not share them. But the religious believer, the Catholic, for example, is fully persuaded that there is no other truth except his. And it

[1] These twenty-three words and the next paragraph but one are not in the Moscow edition.

seems to him that his fountain of truth is proved by reason.[1]

And when we are misled by the false belief in our civilization, it is almost impossible for us to see the illogicalness of our opinions, which are all directed to proving that in all times ours is the only time, that among all nations only so many millions of people inhabiting the continent called Europe command genuine civilization composed of genuine science and genuine art.

In order to comprehend the true significance of life, simple as it is, there is no need of positive philosophy or of deep learning, it is only necessary to have one negative quality: it is necessary *not* to have prejudices. It is necessary to enter into the state of a child or of a Descartes. It is necessary to say to oneself: I know nothing and I wish nothing more than merely to comprehend the true significance of life — that life which I must live.

And the answer was vouchsafed in the earliest times, and this answer is clear and simple.

My innermost feeling tells me that I wish well-being, happiness, for myself, for myself alone. Reason says to me: All men, all creatures, wish the same thing. All beings which, like me, seek their own personal happiness, evidently tend to crush me. And so I cannot attain that happiness which my life is striving toward. This striving toward happiness is my life, but reason shows me that this striving is idle, and that, therefore, I cannot live.

Simple thought shows me that in this terrestrial order of things, while all beings are striving only for their own personal happiness, I, a being who am also striving to the same end, cannot attain this well-being. And I cannot live. But notwithstanding this clear opinion, we do live, and we seek happiness and well-being.

We say to ourselves: I could attain well-being, could be happy, only in the chance that all other beings should love me more than they love themselves.

[1] The three paragraphs preceding are not in the Moscow edition.

This is impossible. But nevertheless we all live, and all our activity, all our strivings for wealth, for family, for fame, for power, are nothing more or less than attempts to make others love us more than they love themselves.

Wealth, fame, power, give us something like that condition of things, and we are almost satisfied; for a time we forget that this is only an illusion and not the reality.

All beings love themselves more than they love us, and happiness is impossible. There are men — and the number of them is increasing every day — who cannot solve this difficulty, and who kill themselves, declaring that life is an empty and stupid jest. But in the meantime the solution of the riddle is more than simple, and offers itself. I can be happy only in a worldly order where all beings should love others more than themselves. The whole world would be happy if all beings loved, not themselves, but their fellows.

I am a being, a man, and reason gives me the law of universal well-being. And I ought to follow this law of my reason, I ought to love others more than myself.

And a man has only to come to this conclusion, for life suddenly to present itself to him from an entirely different standpoint from what it did before.

Beings annihilate one another, but at the same time beings love and assist one another. Life is subjected, not to the passion of destructiveness, but to the feeling of mutuality, which, in the language of our hearts, is called love.

However much I may see development in the life of the world, I see in it only the manifestation of this principle of mutual help. All history is nothing else than an ever clearer and clearer display of this unique principle of the common agreement of all beings.

This opinion is supported both by historical experiment and by personal experiment. But beside the opinion, man finds a most convincing proof of the justice of this opinion in his inner immediate consciousness. The greatest good which man knows, the consciousness of fullest freedom and happiness, is the condition of self-

denial and love. Reason opens up to man the only possible path to happiness, and feeling directs man along this path.

* * * * * * *

If the thoughts which I have tried to present before you seem to you obscure, do not judge them too severely. I hope that sometime you will read their development in a clearer and simpler form. I only wanted to give you an idea of my views of life.

1889.

LETTER TO N. N.

My dear N. N.

I address you as "dear," not because this is a customary form, but because since I received your first letter, and especially since your second one came, I feel that we are very closely united, and I love you dearly. In the feeling which I experience, there is much that is egotistical. You certainly do not think so, but you cannot imagine to what degree I am alone, to what a degree the actual "I" is scorned by all surrounding me. I know that he that endures to the end will be saved: I know that only in trifles is the right given to a man to take advantage of the fruit of his labor, or even to look on this fruit, but that in the matter of divine truth which is eternal it cannot be given to a man to see the fruit of his work, especially in the brief period of his short life: I know all this, and yet I am often despondent, and therefore my meeting with you and the hope, almost the certainty, of finding in you a man who is sincerely going with me in one way, and to one and the same good, is to me very cheering.

Now, then, I will reply in a systematic way. Your letters to Aksakof, especially the last one, pleased me. Your arguments are irresistible, but for him do not exist. Everything he says I knew long ago. This is all repeated in life, in literature, in conversations; it is always the same thing and the same thing. And this is precisely what it is: You say, "I see that this is the truth and this other is false, for this reason and for that, and that this is good and that is evil, for this reason and for that."

Aksakof and those like him see that this is the truth; even before you have told them they know the truth. But

they live in falsehood, but for a man, for any one with a heart which loves right, and hates wrong, and by reason has one purpose of distinguishing truth from falsehood, for such a man to be able to live in falsehood and evil, and to serve them, he must beforehand have shut his eyes to the truth, and continue to do the wrong which he loves. But all have the same kind of blinders: the historical perspective, the objective glance, worry about others, and the setting aside of the question of one's relation to goodness and truth.

This Aksakof is doing, this Soloviof is doing, this all the theologians are doing, this all the governmental people, the political economists, are doing, this is what all who live contrary to truth and goodness and who must justify themselves in their own hearts are doing.

"*And this is the judgment, that the light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light, for their works were evil. For every one that practises evil hates the light, and comes not to the light, lest his works should be reproved. But he that practises the truth comes to the light, that his works may be made manifest that have been wrought in God.*"[1]

It is impossible to express this more clearly than it is said here. From this I draw this conclusion, that it is not necessary to fling pearls to these people, but that one must elaborate a certain relation to them in which our forces will not be wasted. Argument with them is not only an idle business, but injurious to our object. They provoke us by argument to something superfluous, incorrect; and, forgetting all that is most important in what you have said, they stick to this one thing. The relation to them which I try to cultivate in myself, and inculcate in others, is the same as my relation to a depraved drunken youth who should try to contaminate my sixteen-year-old son. I am sorry for this young libertine, but I do not try to reform him, because I know it is impossible. If I chide him, he will only turn me into ridicule before my son. I do not even forcibly remove my son from him, because my son will surely meet him

[1] John iii. 19–21.

or his like again, if not to-day, then to-morrow. I do not even try to make my son see his wickedness. My son himself must discover it. But I strive to fill my son's soul with such instruction that the young libertine's temptations do not appeal to him; otherwise our resources, which are so small, are wasted in throwing away the pearls, and they go on trampling upon and rending, not you and me, N. N., but what is worse, extinguishing the little light that is dawning amid the darkness.

And here, by this digression, I come directly to the second and most important point of your letter. But how to open the eyes of men, to save them from the blandishments of the libertines, when evidence prevents this? *How bring about the accomplishment of evangelical teaching? Ought I not to defend people if they ask me for help, even if it came about that they must be freed by violence, if before my eyes people are beaten and killed?* To defend and free people by violence is not necessary, because this is impossible, and because to try to do good by violence, that is by wrong, is stupid.

My dear, please, for the sake of God's truth which you serve, do not make undue haste, do not lose patience, do not invent proofs of the justice of your opinion before you have thought over, not what I write you, but the Gospels, and not the Gospels as the word of Christ or God and the like, but the Gospels as the clearest, simplest, and most universally comprehensible and practical teaching of how each one of us and all men must live.

If before my eyes a mother is cutting her child to pieces, what must I do? Understand that the question is what ought I to do, that is, what is right and reasonable, and not what will be my first impulse in regard to it. My first impulse at a private insult is to avenge it; but the question comes: Is this reasonable? And exactly the same question arises whether it is reasonable to employ violence upon the mother who is cutting up her child. If the mother is murdering her child, what is it that is painful to me, and I consider wrong? The fact that the child is suffering, or the fact that

the mother is experiencing, not the joy of love, but the torments of hate? And I think that the evil is in both. One man cannot do anything evil. Evil is the discord of men, and therefore, if I wish to act, I can only do so with the aim of putting an end to the discord, and bringing about concord between the mother and child.

How must I act? Constrain the mother? I do not destroy her discord — the sin — with her child, but I only induce a new sin, a discord between her and myself. What is possible? One thing — to put myself in the child's place. This will not be unreasonable.

What Dostoyevsky wrote, and is very repugnant to me, is said to me by ascetic monks and metropolitans, to wit, that it is possible to wage wars, that this is self-defense — to offer your life for your brethren; and I have always replied, — to defend them by your own breast, offering yourself, is right, but to shoot people with guns is not self-defense, but murder. Investigate the teaching of the Gospels, and you will see that the third brief commandment,[1] not to resist evil, that is, not to return evil for evil, is, I will not say the chief, but is the keystone of the whole teaching, and the very thing which all pseudo-Christian commentaries have strenuously avoided and still avoid, and is the very position, the denial of which serves as the foundation of all that you so righteously hate.

I am not speaking of the council of Nicæa, which accomplished so much evil, and was based on this very same understanding of Christ's teaching, that is, on violence in the name of right and of Christ; in the apostolic times, in Paul, in the Acts, this idea of violence in the name of right is begotten, and destroys the meaning of the doctrine.

How often it has happened ludicrously to me in my conversations with popes and revolutionists, who regarded the evangelical teaching as a weapon for the attainment of external objects, that men of these two classes standing

[1] *You have heard that it was said, An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth; but I say unto you, Resist not evil; but whoever smites you on the right cheek turn to him the other also.* — MATTHEW x. 38, 39.

at opposite poles, yet with unanimous heat, denied this special datum of Christ's teaching. For the first, it is impossible not to lose temper, to choke off dissidents, not to glorify the battle-field and capital punishments; for the second, it is impossible not to use violence in destroying the existing, ugly disorder which is called order. Evidently popes and authorities cannot even imagine the lives of men without violence. Exactly so it is with the revolutionists.

You know a tree by its fruits; a good tree cannot bring forth the fruits of violence. Christ's teaching cannot justify the one in choking, or the other in putting out of the way. And therefore both the one party and the other, distorting the doctrine, deprive themselves of that true force which is given by faith in the truth, in the whole truth, and not in a small fraction of it.

Those that lift the sword shall perish with the sword; this is not a prediction, but the assertion of a fact known to all. *The lamp of the body is the eye; if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is the darkness!*

If thy light is darkness, if what you consider good is evil, the work also of thy life will be evil. It is impossible to serve God a little, the devil also a little. And the Gospel is not such a stupid book as the popes make it out for us. And each proposition is laid down in it, not idly, but so that it is organically connected with the whole teaching; thus the command as to non-resistance of evil runs through the whole of the Gospels, and without it the teaching of the Gospel, for me at least, wholly falls to the ground.

Moreover, it is expressed another time so clearly and directly that it is impossible to escape it; moreover, the whole account of Christ's life and actions is an application of this commandment; moreover in John, Caiaphas is represented as not comprehending this truth, and the consequence of not understanding this truth, under the pretext of the advantage of the people, ruin-

ing Christ's life, there directly points to the fact that resistance of evil is the most terrible and dangerous temptation, and that not only Christ's disciples yielded, but the Master himself almost did.

But, moreover, it now seems to me that even if Christ and his teaching had not existed, I myself should have discovered this truth, so simple and clear it seems to me now, and I am persuaded will seem equally clear to you. It is now so clear to me that, if I allow myself the slightest violence under the pretext of correcting the greatest evil, then another on the same pretext will allow himself to commit the smallest act of violence, and a third and a fourth and millions of trifling acts of violence will compose the awful evil which now reigns in the world and crushes us.

Now if you have heeded my request and have read calmly, refraining from the proofs of the confirmation of your opinion, but have followed my exposition, then I hope you have agreed that these are powerful proofs of the opinion which you oppose, and I hope still further that you will agree with me when you have read my short exposition [1] and my translation of the four Gospels which I send you.

As far as I can imagine, you are now in such a position; your reason tells you that I am right, but your heart revolts against such a position in regard to the non-resistance of evil. You say to yourself: —

"Whatever here is wrong, whatever mistakes in judgment are here, I will find it and I will prove it, because it cannot be that Christ's teaching, the teaching of love to your brother, should lead a man to sit down and fold his arms while looking on at the evil that is taking place in the world.

"It is all very well," you say, "for him, a worn-out old man, to indulge in idle chatter and try to persuade every one that evil must be endured. It is very well for him, he is fat and contented, he has everything he needs, and only a little while to live. All the warmth of his life has been used up, while I feel without argu-

[1] Vol. xvii. p. 281, "The Gospel in Brief."

ment that love for goodness and truth is not lodged in me, and hatred of evil and falsehood, without some purpose. I cannot help expressing it, I cannot live in its name, and every step of my life is a battle with evil. And I am bound to fight, and I shall fight it with such means as have already been opened up to me, or will present themselves in the future. Propagandism is necessary among the people, connection with the dissidents, action on the government, and the like."

The feeling that suggests this is a good feeling, and I love you for it; but this same feeling incited Peter to draw his knife and cut off the servant's ear. Imagine to yourself what would have happened if Jesus had not restrained them: a riot would have taken place, Jesus' followers would have fled, and then they would have captured Jerusalem. They would have cut men down and they would have been cut down. What would have been the Christian teaching? It would not have been, and there would have been nothing for us to boast about; we should have been worse than the Aksakofs and Soloviofs.

In order that you may more freely express my thought, I will tell you what I think, in what I consider Christ's teaching consists — a teaching not misty and metaphysical, but a clear and vital teaching.

All say that the significance of Christianity lies in loving God and your neighbor as yourself. But what is this God? What is it to love? How can one love anything incomprehensible — God? What is one's neighbor? What am I myself?

These words have for me this meaning: to love God means to love truth; to love one's neighbor as one's self means to acknowledge the unity of the essence of one's soul and life with every other human life — with eternal truth — God.

Thus it is for me.

But it is clear to me that these words, which really define nothing, may be understood otherwise, and that the majority cannot even understand them as I do. The principal thing is that these words neither for me

nor for any one else entail any obligation or define anything. What can be the love of a God whom every one understands in his own way, and whom others do not recognize at all, and what can be the love for a neighbor as for oneself, when I am filled with a self-love which never for an instant leaves me, and often with a constant hatred to others?

This is all so obscure and impracticable that it remains an empty phrase. My opinion is that this position is metaphysical, very important as such, but when this position is accepted as a rule of life, as a law, then it is simply stupid. And unfortunately it is frequently so understood. I say all this so as to explain that the significance of Christianity, as of every other religion, is not found in metaphysical principles, — metaphysical principles exist in all humanity: Buddha, Confucius, Socrates, have always been and will always be the same, — but in the application of them to life, in the vital production of that happiness of every man and of all humanity which is attained by the application of these principles to life, to explaining the possibility of the application of them and to the definition of the rules whereby it is attained.

Even in Deuteronomy it says: Love God and your neighbor as yourself; but the application of this principle, according to Deuteronomy, consisted in circumcision, the Sabbath, and the criminal law.

The significance of Christianity consists in proving the possibility and the blessedness of fulfilling the law of love. Christ, in the Sermon on the Mount, very clearly defined how it was necessary and possible for one's own happiness and that of all men to fulfil this law. In the Sermon on the Mount — without which there would have been no teaching of Christ, what all agree in is that which Christ says, not to the wise, but to the illiterate, the clownish, — in this sermon, which is provided with an introduction in regard to the person who shall break one of the least of the commandments (Matthew v. 17–20), and with an exordium to the effect that it is not necessary to speak but to fulfil (Matthew

vii. 21–27), — in this sermon the whole thing is said, and five commands are given as to the way of fulfilling the teaching.

In the Sermon on the Mount, the simplest, easiest, most comprehensible rules are laid down for love to God and one's neighbor, and for living without recognizing and fulfilling these commands it is idle to speak of Christianity. And strange as it may seem to say this after eighteen hundred years, it was brought to me to expound these rules as something new. And only when I understood these rules did I understand the significance of Christ's teaching. These rules so wonderfully embrace the whole life of every man and of all humanity, that only let a man proceed to fulfil these rules on earth and we should have on earth the reign of righteousness!

And then analyze all of these rules separately, applying them to yourself, and you will see that this unimaginably blessed and enormous result will be derived from the fulfilment of these most simple and natural, and not only easy, but also pleasant rules.

Do you imagine that it would be necessary for anything to be added to these rules in order for the kingdom of righteousness to exist? Nothing is necessary.

Do you imagine that anything could be taken from these rules without the kingdom of righteousness being infringed? Impossible!

If I knew nothing of Christ's teaching except these five rules, I should be just as much a Christian as I am now: —

I. Be not angry.
II. Do not commit fornication.
III. Take no oaths.
IV. Judge not; and
V. Do not go to war.

For me this constitutes the essence of Christ's teaching. And this clear expression of Christ's teaching has been hidden from men, and consequently humanity has constantly wandered away from it in two opposite directions. Some, seeing in Christ's teaching the teaching

of saving their souls for the sake of an eternal life, coarsely presented to them, were estranged from the world, striving only to do what they could to perfect themselves in solitude; this would have been ridiculous if it had not been so pitiful. And terrible efforts were put forth by these people, and there have been many of them, on an impossible and stupid thing, — to do good to themselves in solitude, away from men.

Others, on the contrary, not believing in a future life, have lived — the best of them — only for others, but did not know and did not care to know what was necessary for themselves, or why they wanted to do good to others and what this good was.

It seems to me that the one is impossible without the other: a man cannot do good to himself, to his soul, without doing for others and with others, as religious ascetics, and the best of them, have done; and a man cannot do good to men if he does not know what is necessary for him, and why he is acting, as has been done and is done by social workers without any faith.

I like men of the first kind, but with all the strength of my soul I hate their doctrine; and I like very much men of the second kind, and I hate their doctrine. There is truth only in that teaching which demands activity — a life which satisfies the demands of the soul, and at the same time is a constant activity for the good of others. Such was Christ's teaching. It is at once far from the quietism of the monk and from the anxiety about the soul and from the ardor of the revolutionist — governmental, priestly activity is revolutionary — who wishes to load others with benefits, and yet at the same time does not know what the true indubitable blessing is.

The Christian's life is such that it is impossible to do good to men otherwise than by doing good to himself, to his reasonable soul, and not to do good to himself otherwise than by doing good to his brethren. The Christian life is at once far removed from quietism and from agitation. Young people even of your turn of thought are inclined to confuse the true Christian teaching with the

quietism of the superstitious, and it seems to them that to renounce the resistance of evil by violence is very easy and convenient, and that from this the Christian movement grows feeble and is deprived of force. This is not true. You understand that the Christian renounces violence, not because he does not love what you desire, not because he does not see that violence is the first impulse that seizes a man at the sight of evil, but because he sees that violence shuts him off from his goal, and does not bring him near it, that it is not reasonable, as it is not reasonable for a man desiring to reach the water of a fountain to strike with his cane the earth which separates him from the spring; and for the man abstaining from violence it is no easier — on the contrary; just as it is no easier to take a spade and dig, than it is to pound the ground with a stake.

It is easier for him only because he assuredly knows that by not opposing evil with violence, but by meeting it with goodness and truth, he is doing what he can to fulfil the will of the Father, according to Christ's expression. It is impossible to quench fire with fire, to dry water with water, by evil to annihilate evil. This has been tried, tried since the world began, and now we are brought to that condition in which we now live. It would seem to be time to put aside the old way and undertake a new one, especially as it is more reasonable. If there is any advance, then it is only due to those that repay good for evil. Oh, if only one-millionth of those efforts which are employed by men to overcome evil by violence were employed in enduring evil, not taking part in it, and shining by the light that is given to every man!

Though simple from the customary point of view — nothing has been attained by this; then why not try the other, the more that it is so clear, manifest, and joyous? Here is a particular example; let us remember Russia during the last twenty years. How much genuine desire for righteousness, how much readiness for sacrifices, has been wasted by our intelligent classes — by establishing right, in doing good to men? And

what has been done? Nothing, worse than nothing! There has been a terrible waste of spiritual energies! They have broken the stake and they have beaten down the earth worse than before, which does not save the spade. Instead of these terrible sacrifices which are endured by the young, instead of the gunshots, explosions, printing-offices, what if these people should believe in Christ's teaching, that is, should come to the conclusion that the Christian life is the only reasonable life, that if instead of this terrible expenditure of force, one, two, a dozen, a hundred men, when called to military service, should say: "We cannot serve murderers, because we believe in Christ's teaching, which we preach. This is forbidden by His law."

They would say the same thing in relation to taking the oath, they would say the same thing in relation to courts, they would say the same thing and put it into practice in regard to the violence which supports private property; what would be the outcome of this I do not know, but I know that it would help the matter along, and that this is one way of fruitful activity — not to act contrary to Christ's teaching, and boldly and openly to confirm it — and not merely for the attainment of external aims, but for one's inner satisfaction, which consists in not doing evil to others while one is not yet strong enough to do them good.

This is my answer to your questions as to what is necessary to attain. It is necessary to attain this — the fulfilment of Christ's laws, and making plain to men the light and pleasure of fulfilling them.

All this, however, is better said in Matthew v. 13–16. I anticipate one further objection. You will say: "It is not clear how to fulfil these rules and to what they will lead us. How according to these rules to act toward private property, toward the authorities, toward international relations?"

Do not imagine that in Christ there was any lack of clearness. All is clear as day. The relation toward the authorities is told in the story of the penny. Money — private property — is not a Christian matter. It comes

from the authorities; give it back to the authorities. But your free soul is from the God of truth, and therefore give not your actions, your freedom of reason, to any one, except to God. They may kill you, but they cannot compel you to kill and to do an unchristian act.

As to private property, there is no private property according to the Gospels, and woe to those that have it; that is to say, it is bad for them, and so in whatever position a Christian finds himself, he cannot do anything in relation to the private property of any one else than not take part in the violence perpetrated in the name of private property; and he must assure others that private property is a myth, there is no private property, but there is a certain customary use of force in relation to the advantage of things which men call private property, and which is bad. For the man who shall give away his cloak when they want to deprive him of his shirt there can be no talk of private property.

Neither can there be any question of international relations. All men are brothers — of the same sort. And if a Zulu should come to murder my children, the only thing I can do is to try to persuade the Zulu that this is not to his advantage and not good — to persuade him, submitting to him by violence, the more so as there is no certainty in fighting with the Zulu. Either he gets the better of me, and, still more, murders my children, or I get the advantage, and my children the next day will be taken down with some illness, and suffer more, and die of it. There is no certainty, because if I submit I probably do better, while if I enter into a contest with him, it is a question whether I do any better.

This, then, is my answer: the very best thing that we can do is to fulfil all of Christ's teaching. But in order to fulfil it we must be convinced that it is true, both for all humanity and for each one of us. Have you this faith?

I think it best to print your article, though with some abbreviation. There are still two objections or questions which I raise; you will make them to me. The first is: What if, by submitting, as I say, to the Zulu and to the

policeman, and by giving up to the evil man all that he wishes to take from me, if by not taking part in governmental institutions of courts, educational institutions, universities, by not recognizing private property, you fall to the lowest degree of the social scale, you are trodden down and abused, you become a tramp — a beggar, and the light which is in you is wasted, no one sees it; and therefore is it not better to keep one's self at a certain degree of independence of need, and the possibility of refinement and intercourse with the great majority of the people? It really seems so. And it seems so because so dear to us are the amenities of life, our refinement, and all those so-called pleasures which it provides us, and we act against our conscience saying so. It is unjust because on whatever low plane he may stand he will always be with men, and therefore in a condition to do them good. But whether the professors of a university are better, whether the inmates of a cheap lodging-house are more important, for the Christian profession, is a question which no one can decide. My own feeling and Christ's example plead for the indigent; only the indigent can preach, that is, teach the reasonable life.

I may argue beautifully and be sincere, but no one will ever have faith in me as long as it is seen that I am living in a palace and with my family wasting every day the cost of a whole year's food for a poor family. But as regards our so-called culture, surely it would seem to be time to cease speaking of it as of a blessing. In spoiling a man, it spoils altogether ninety-nine out of a hundred, but it can never add anything to a man.

You probably know about Siutayef. Here we have an unlettered muzhik, but his influence on men, on our intelligence, is greater and more important than all the Russian savants and writers, including all the Pushkins and Byelinskys, from Tretyakovsky down to our time.[1] So in losing you lose nothing. And if any one leaves

[1] Aleksandr Sergeyevitch Pushkin, Russia's greatest lyric poet, born June 7, 1799, died Feb. 8, 1837; Vissarion Grigoryevitch Byelinsky, a famous Russian critic, born 1810, died 1848; Vasili Kirillovitch Tretyakovsky, translator, poetaster, scientist, born 1703, died 1769.

father and mother and brethren and wife and children, he will find a hundred times more here in this world, and houses and fathers and the eternal life besides. "*Many that are first shall be last.*"[1]

Now the second question, directly, involuntarily proceeding from the first: "Now here are you, Lyof Nikolayevitch, preaching and preaching, but how do you fulfil what you preach?"

This question is most natural, and I am all the time asked it, and they always close my mouth triumphantly.

You preach, but how do you live?

And I reply that I do not preach and I cannot preach, though I passionately desire to. I can preach by deed, but my deeds are vile. What I say is not preaching, but is only a refutation of a false conception of the Christian doctrine, and an explanation of its actual significance. Its significance is not the reconstruction of society, in its name, by violent means; its significance is in finding the meaning of life in this world. The fulfilment of the five commandments gives this meaning. If you wish to be a Christian, then you must fulfil these commandments, but if you do not wish to fulfil them, then do not prate about Christianity outside of the fulfilment of these commandments.

But, they say to me, if you find that outside of the fulfilment of the Christian teaching there is no reasonable life, and you love this reasonable life, why do you not fulfil the commandments?

I reply that I am to blame, and vile, and worthy of scorn because I do not fulfil them, but in this respect not so much in the way of exculpation, as in explanation of my inconsistency, I say: "Look at my former life and look at my life now, and you will see that I am trying to fulfil them. I have not fulfilled one ten thousandth part, it is true, and I am to blame; but I have not fulfilled them, not because I have not wanted to, but because I could not. Teach me how to disentangle myself from the net of temptations in which I am caught; help me, and I will fulfil them; but even with-

[1] Matthew x. 29.

out help I wish and hope to fulfil them. Blame me! I myself do that, but blame me, and not the road by which I go, and which I point out to those that ask me where, in my opinion, the road is. If I know the road home, and go along it intoxicated, staggering from side to side, does that make it any the less the true way by which I go? If it is not the right way, show me another; if I go astray and stagger, help me, keep me on the real way, as I am ready to keep you; but do not beat me off, do not rejoice because I have lost my way, do not cry out in enthusiasm: "There he is! He says he is going home, but he is sprawling in the slough." No, do not rejoice in this, but help me, hold me!

For you see you are not devils of the slough, but likewise people going home. For I am alone, and I do not wish to fall into the slough. Help me! help me! my heart is bursting with despair, that we are all blundering; and when I am struggling with all my powers, you, every time we go astray, instead of feeling sorry for yourself and myself, cry with enthusiasm, "Lo, here we all are in the slough!"

This, then, is my relation to the teaching and its fulfilment. With all my might I am striving to fulfil it, and at every failure I not only confess it, but I beg for help so as to be in a condition to fulfil it, and I meet joyously every one who is seeking the way, even as I am, and heed him.

If you read what I am sending, the substance of this letter will be clearer to you.

Write me. I am very glad to correspond with you, and I shall await your reply with impatience.

1883.

INDUSTRY; OR, THE FARMER'S TRIUMPH

"*In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat thy bread, till thou returnest unto the ground, for out of it wast thou taken.*" — GENESIS iii. 19.

SUCH is the title and such the epigraph to the work of Timofeï Mikhaïlovitch Bondaref. This work I read in manuscript.

Timofeï Mikhaïlovitch Bondaref's work seems to me very notable, as well for the force and clearness and beauty of the style in which it is written, as for the sincerity of his conviction manifest in every line, and especially for the importance, truth, and depth of the fundamental thought.

The fundamental thought of this work is as follows: In all terrestrial affairs the thing of importance is, not to know what is particularly fine and necessary, but out of all fine and necessary things or actions to know what is of first importance, what of second, what of third, and so on.

If this is important in terrestrial affairs, much so is it important in the matter of faith, which determines a man's obligations.

Tatian, a teacher in the early days of the Church, declares that the unhappiness of men comes not so much from the fact that they do not know God, as from the fact that they acknowledge a false God, they consider as God that which is not God. The same thing may be said also concerning the obligations of men. The unhappiness and wrong-doing of men come not so much from the fact that they do not know what their obligations are, as from the fact that they acknowledge

false obligations, that they consider as obligatory what is not obligatory, and they do not consider as obligatory what is their chief duty.

Bondaref declares that the unhappiness and wrong-doing of men come from the fact that they consider as religious duties many idle and injurious regulations, but forget and hide from themselves and others their first, chief, unquestionable duty, expressed in the first chapter of the Holy Scriptures: "*In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat thy bread.*"

For men who believe in the sanctity and infallibility of the divine word expressed in the Bible, this command given by God himself and never repudiated is a sufficient proof of its truth. For men who do not accept the Holy Scriptures and the truth of this position, if we regard it merely without prejudice as a simple unsupernatural expression of human wisdom, it seems to be the fulfilment of the conditions of human life, just as Bondaref makes it in his work.

An obstacle to such a fulfilment, unfortunately, is found in the fact that many of us are so wonted to a perverted and senseless interpretation of the Holy Scriptures, that the mere mention of the fact that a certain position coincides with the Holy Scriptures is a sufficient ground for many to look with distrust on that position.

"What meaning have the Holy Scriptures for me? We know that we may build any argument we please on them."

But this is not just; the Holy Scriptures are not to blame because men interpret them falsely, and a man who speaks the truth is not to blame because he speaks the same truth as is spoken in the Holy Scriptures.

We must not forget that if it is admitted that the writings called the Holy Scriptures are the productions of God but of men, then it must be explained why these popular writings and not others are accepted by men as the work of God himself. There must be some cause for this.

And this cause is clear. These writings are called divine by superstitious people because they are higher than all the knowledge of men, and also because these

writings, in spite of the fact that certain men have always denied them, have come down to us, and are still considered divine. These writings are called divine and have come down to us simply because a lofty wisdom is embodied in them. And such in many of their passages are the writings which we call the Bible.

And such especially is the forgotten text, neglected and incomprehensible in its actual sense — the text which Bondaref explains and makes the corner-stone of his work.

This text and the first events of life in Paradise are usually understood in the direct sense of the words, meaning that everything happened precisely as it is described; but meantime the sense of this whole passage is this also, that it presents in picturesque form the contradictory impulses which are found in human nature.

Man is afraid of death, and yet he must die; man, as long as he knows not good and evil, seems happier, but he irresistibly strives to attain knowledge. Man loves idleness, and the gratification of his desires without suffering, and at the same time only labor and suffering give life to him and his race.

This text is important, not so much because it was spoken by God Himself to Adam, but because it is true: it utters one of the most undoubted laws of human life. The law of gravitation is not true because it was enunciated by Newton, but because I know Newton and am grateful to him for having discovered for me an eternal law which explains for me a whole series of phenomena.

The same thing also with the law, "*In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat thy bread.*" This is a law which explains for me a whole series of phenomena. And having once recognized it I can no longer forget it, and I am grateful to him who discovered it for me. This law seems very simple, and has been long known, but it only seems so, and to see that it is the opposite all you have to do is to look around about you. Men not only do not acknowledge this law, but they acknowledge one precisely the opposite. Men, by their faith,

— all, from the Tsar to the beggar, are striving not to fulfil this law, but to avoid fulfilling it. The above mentioned work of Bondaref is consecrated to an explanation of the importance, of the unalterableness, of the law, and the inevitability of the misfortunes arising from a neglect of it. Bondaref calls this law primeval, and the chief of all laws.

He shows that sin — in other words, the mistakes, the false steps we make — results only from the neglect of this law. Of all the obligations imposed on man, Bondaref considers the first, chief, and invariable duty of every man to work with his hands for his daily bread, meaning by bread all the heavy "black work" which is necessary to save a man from death by cold and starvation — in other words, bread and drink and raiment and shelter and warmth.

Bondaref's fundamental idea is that this law, — the law that a man to eat must work, — which till now has been considered as necessary, must be regarded as a blessed law of life, an obligation for every one.

This law must be acknowledged as a religious law, like the observance of the Sabbath, circumcision among the Hebrews, like the observance of the sacraments and Lent among Church Christians, like fivefold prayer among the Mohammedans.

Bondaref says in one place that if only men will recognize labor for their daily bread as a religious duty, then no particular private occupations can prevent them from doing this work, just as no special occupations can prevent churchmen from participating in the inactivity of their festivals. More than eighty days are taken out for festivals, but according to Bondaref only forty days are required to earn a man's daily bread. Strange as it may seem at first that such a simple method, comprehensible to all, free from anything subtile or sophisticated, can serve as a salvation from the actual numberless evils of humanity; it is still stranger, when you come to think of it, how we, having had such a simple and clear method, long known to all men, have put it aside and sought relief from our ills in

various subtilities and philosophies. But if you consider this, you will see that it is so. Supposing a man should make a tub without a bottom, and should then devise all sorts of clever schemes to carry water in it! This is what all our methods for curing existent evils amount to!

In fact, whence arise the calamities of men, if you exclude from the number the calamities that men directly bring on one another by murders, capital punishments, taxes, brawls, and all sorts of cruelties in which they sin by not refraining from violence?

All the calamities of mankind, with the exceptions of those caused by direct violence, proceed from hunger, from all kinds of deprivation, from overwork, and at the same time from superfluity, from sloth, and from the vices growing out of them. Whatever may be the holiest duty of man, is there any more so than that of bringing about the destruction of this inequality, of these calamities, of lack in some and of superfluity in others? And how can a man coöperate in the destruction of these calamities otherwise than by taking part in the labor which overcomes need, and by refraining from the superfluities and the idleness which produce vices and temptations; in other words, that every one should labor for his daily bread, should provide himself with food by the work of his hands, as Bondaref says?

We have so involved ourselves, laying down so many laws, both religious and social and domestic, so many precepts, — as Isaiah says, precept on precept, here a precept, there a precept, — that we have entirely lost the meaning of what is good and what is bad.

A man conducts a mass, another collects an army or taxes for it, a third sits on the bench, a fourth studies books, a fifth practises medicine, a sixth teaches men; and under these pretexts, freeing themselves from manual labor, they shirk it on others, and forget that men are dying of overwork, toil, and starvation: and in order that some one may sing at mass, some one may be protected by an army, some one may sit in judgment, some one may practise medicine or teach, it is

necessary that first of all men may cease dying of starvation. We forget that there may be many duties, but that there is a first and a last, and that it is impossible to fulfil the last until the first is fulfilled, just as it is impossible to harrow before the plowing is done.

Here we are recalled to this first indubitable duty in the domain of practical activity by Bondaref's teaching. Bondaref shows that the fulfilment of this obligation does not interfere with any one, presents no difficulties, and at the same time saves people from the calamity of need and superfluity. The fulfilment of this duty especially annihilates the terrible division into two classes which hate each other, and by flattery palliate their mutual hatred. Manual labor, says Bondaref, equalizes all, and clips the wings of luxury and lust.

It is impossible to plow and dig wells in costly raiment and with clean hands and after feeding on delicate food. Occupation in one sacred labor common to all brings men close together. Labor for daily bread, says Bondaref, restores reason to those that have lost it by separation from the life natural to mankind, and gives happiness and contentment to men by occupying them in work, which is undoubtedly advantageous and cheery, assigned by God Himself or by the laws of nature.

Labor for daily bread, says Bondaref, is a remedy which saves humanity. Let men acknowledge this first law as the law of God and unchangeable, let each man acknowledge it as his infallible duty to labor for his daily bread, in other words, to earn his own living with his hands, and all men will be united in faith in one God, in love to one another, and the calamities which overwhelm mankind will be done away with.

We are so accustomed to an order of life which takes the opposite for granted, that is, that wealth, as a means of freeing men from the necessity of daily labor, is either the blessing of God or the highest social position, that, if we do not examine into this position, we prefer to call it narrow, one-sided, idle, and stupid. But we must seriously consider the matter, and judge whether this stand is not just.

As we test every kind of theory, religious and political, let us also test Bondaref's theory as a theory. Let us see what would result if, according to Bondaref's idea, the religious sermonizing were to direct its forces to the explanation of this law, and all men were to recognize this primary law of labor as obligatory.

All would work and eat the bread that resulted from their labors, and bread and objects of the first importance would no longer become objects of purchase and sale. Then what would result?

The result would be that there would be no more people perishing of want. If one man, in consequence of unfortunate circumstances, did not by his labor secure enough food for himself and his family, another, in consequence of fortunate circumstances having got more than he needed, would give to the one lacking, would give because, as he no longer sells, he would have nothing else to do with his superfluity. The result would be that a man would not be subjected to the temptation of acquiring bread by shrewdness, and not having this temptation, he would not use force or cunning, he would not need to do as he does at the present time.

If he employed cunning or violence, it would be only because he loved cunning and violence, and not because they are indispensable, as they are at the present time.

For the weak, for those that had not the strength for any reason to earn their own bread, or that had in some way lost it, there would be no necessity of selling themselves or their labor, or, as it sometimes happens, their very souls, to get their bread.

There would be none of our present universal striving to get rid of manual labor, and shirking it on others, — the striving to crush the weak with labor and to free the strong from all work.

There would be none of that disposition of the human mind whereby all the forces of the human intellect are directed, not to lightening the work of the workers, but to make the leisure of the leisure more light and attractive. The participation of all men in manual labor, and recognizing it as the chief of all human actions, would

do what a man would do with a cart which stupid people would drag with the wheels in the air, while he would turn it over and set on the wheels on the ground. It would not break the cart and it would go easily.

Now, our life with its scorn and dislike of manual labor and our justification of this false life is the cart which we drag with the wheels in the air. And all our justifications of this work do not profit us, since we do not turn the cart over and set it where it should stand.

Such is Bondaref's idea, and I fully share it. His idea presents itself before me as follows: There was a time when men ate one another. The consciousness of the unity of all men developed to such a degree that cannibalism became impossible, and they ceased to eat one another. Then came the time when men by force took away the labor of others and reduced them to slavery. The conscience of men developed to the point that this became impossible. Violence which still persisted in hidden forms was annihilated in its coarser manifestation; man no longer openly took possession of the labor of another.

In our time there exists the form of violence in so far as men, profiting by the necessity of others, subject them to themselves. According to Bondaref's idea, the time has now come for such recognition of the unity of man that it is no longer possible for men to take advantage of others' necessities — in other words, their hunger and nakedness — to bring them into subjection, and for men, acknowledging the law of manual labor as obligatory on every one, to acknowledge their duty unconditionally, by refraining from the sale of objects of the first importance in case of necessity to feed, clothe, and house one another.

Again, on the other hand, I look on Bondaref's work as follows: We often happen to hear criticisms on the insufficiency of certain prohibitory laws or commands, that is to say, regulations concerning what must not be done. They say: Positive laws or commands are necessary, regulations are necessary as to what exactly

[1] *Golod i kholod.*

must be done. They say the five commands of Christ: (1) not to look down on any one, or call any one a fool, or be angry with any one; (2) not to look on copulation as a source of satisfaction, not to desert husband or wife when once a union has been consummated; (3) not to bind oneself with an oath to any one, not to fetter one's free will; (4) to bear insults and violence and not to resist; and (5) not to consider any men as enemies, but to love your enemies as well as your neighbors — they say that these five commands of Christ all prescribe only what is necessary not to do, but that there are no commands or laws prescribing exactly what must be done; and indeed it may seem strange that in Christ's teaching there are no definite commands as to what must be done. But this seems strange only to one who does not believe in Christ's teaching itself, included, not in the five commands, but in the teaching itself of truth.

The teaching of truth expressed by Christ is not found in laws and commands; it is found in one thing, in the meaning that it gives to life. The meaning of this teaching is in this one thing, that life and the blessing of life are not in personal happiness, as people suppose, but in the service of God and man. And this position is not a prescription which should be carried out for the sake of receiving a reward, is not a mystic expression of something mysterious and incomprehensible, but is the revelation of a hitherto hidden law of life, is an indication that life can be a blessing only when it is thus understood. And therefore all Christ's positive teaching of truth is expressed in one thing: *Love God, and thy neighbor as thyself.* And there can be no explanations of this position. It is one thing because this one thing is all. Christ's laws and commands, like the Jewish and Buddhist laws and commands, are only indications of those conditions in which the temptations of the world seduce men from the true understanding of life. And therefore there may be many laws and commands, but there can be only one positive teaching of life, of what must be done.

The life of every man is a movement in a certain di-

rection; whether he wishes or not, he moves, he lives. Christ shows a man his path, and moreover points out the turns from the true path which may lead him into falsehood, and there may be many such indications — these are the commands.

Christ gives five such commands, and those He gives are of such kind that up to the present time it is impossible to add one to them, or to take one away. But only one single indication of the direction of the path was given — since there cannot be more than one straight line indicating any direction. Hence the idea that in Christ's teaching there are only prohibitions, but no positive commands, is right for those only that do not know or believe in the teaching of the truth, in the direction of the true path of life, pointed out by Christ. Men who do not believe in the truth of the way of life pointed out by Christ cannot find positive commands in Christ's teaching. All positive activity, even the most varied, flowing from the teaching of the right way of life, is clear and always undoubtedly definite for them.

Men who believe in the way of life are, according to Christ's sentence, like a fountain of living water, that is, like a fountain proceeding from the earth. All their activity is like the flowing of water, which flows steadily in all directions in spite of the obstacles blocking it. A man who believes in Christ's teaching can just as little ask what he must positively do, as the spring of water flowing from the earth can ask such a question. It flows, refreshing the soil, the turf, the trees, the birds, the animals, and men. The same is true of the man who believes in Christ's doctrine of life.

The man who believes in Christ's teaching will not ask what he must do. The love which constitutes the force of his life faithfully and undoubtedly shows him where he must act and what he must do, both before and after. To say nothing of those directions of which Christ's teaching is full — as to what is the first and most important act of love, as to feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, clothing the naked, helping the needy and imprisoned — both reason and conscience

and feeling, everything, lead us to this: — before all other acts of love toward living men, to support this life of our brethren, to deliver them from suffering and death which overtakes them in their unequal struggle with nature, in other words, lead us to the first act necessary for the life of men — to primitive, coarse physical labor on the soil.

Just as a spring cannot ask where it is to send its water, whether it shall spurt up on the grass and the leaves of the trees, or trickle down to the roots of the grass and the trees, so the man that believes in the teaching of truth cannot ask what he must do first of all; whether to teach them, defend them, amuse them, give them the pleasures of life, or support them when they are perishing from need.

And just as the spring of water flows down over levels and fills the ponds, and quenches the thirst of animals and men, only after it has soaked the soil, so also the man that believes in the teaching of truth can help along the less pressing demands of men, only after he has satisfied the first demand, that is, when he has helped in the nourishment of men, in their salvation from destruction in consequence of their struggle with need.

The man that follows, not in word, but in deed, the teaching of truth and love, cannot be mistaken in the direction in which first of all he must apply his activity. Never can a man who applies the meaning of his life to the service of others, be so mistaken as to begin to help cold and hungry humanity by founding cannon, by the manufacture of elegant objects, or by playing on the fiddle or on the pianoforte.

Love cannot be stupid. As love for one person does not permit the reading of novels to him when he is hungry or putting on him costly earrings when he is cold, so love for men does not allow it to be possible to serve them by amusing the prosperous, while allowing the cold and hungry to die of their necessities.

True love — expressed in deeds, not words — not only cannot be stupid, but it is the only thing that gives true sagacity and wisdom.

And therefore the man penetrated with love will make no mistake, and will always do first of all what love for men demands — that which supports the life of the cold, the hungry, and the despondent; — he does not support the life of the cold, the hungry, and the despondent, but the struggle, the out and out struggle with nature, does. Only the man that wishes to deceive himself and others can in the time of danger and men's battle with necessity turn aside from aiding them, augment the necessity of men, and persuade himself and those that are perishing before his eyes, that he is occupied in devising for them means of salvation.

No genuine man who applies his life to the service of others will say this. And if he says this, never will he find in his conscience any support for his mistake; he will find it only in the crafty doctrine of the division of labor.

In all expressions of genuine popular wisdom from Confucius to Mohammed he will find one thing, will find it with especial force in the Gospels, will find the demand for the service of men, not according to the theory of the subdivision of labor, but in the simplest, most natural, and only necessary way, will find the need of serving the sick, the imprisoned, the cold, and the starving. But to extend aid to the sick, the imprisoned, the cold, and the starving is impossible otherwise than by one's immediate instant labor, because the sick, the cold, and the hungry will not wait, but will die of cold and hunger. To the man who fulfils the teaching of the truth, his life, consisting in service of others, points to this fundamental law expressed in the first book of Genesis: *In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat thy bread,* which Bondaref calls fundamental and makes mandatory.

This law is really such for men who do not acknowledge that significance of life which Christ made evident to men, and such it was for men before Christ's day, and such it remains for men who do not acknowledge Christ's teaching. It demands that every man, according to God's will, expressed both in the Bible and in

reason, should earn his own daily food. This law is mandatory. Such was this law even before the meaning of life was made plain to men in the teaching of the truth.

But in the loftiest consciousness of the meaning of life discovered by Christ, the law of manual labor, still remaining true, stands as a part of the only positive doctrine of Christ concerning the service of others, and receives the significance, not of a positive, but of a prohibitory, law. This law, in the Christian conscience, points only to an ancient temptation of men, to what a man ought not to do if he would avoid departing from the path of the true life.

For a man of the Old Testament, who did not acknowledge the teaching of the truth, this law has the same significance: earn your bread with your own hands. For the Christian its significance is negative. This law says: Do not suppose it possible to serve men while swallowing up the labor of others, and while you do not earn your subsistence with your own hands. This law, for the Christian, points to one of the oldest and most terrible temptations that people suffer from. Against this temptation, terrible in its consequences, and so very ancient that we with difficulty may recognize this temptation, not as a natural quality of a man, but as a deception, this doctrine of Bondaref is directed, — a doctrine obligatory on the Old Testament man who believes in the Scriptures, and the Christian who believes in the Scriptures, and the man that does not believe in the Scriptures, but follows his reason alone, and for the man that recognizes the teaching of the truth.

Reader and dear brother, whoever you are, I love you and not only do not wish to offend or affront you, to bring evil into your life, but I do wish one thing, and that is to serve you.

I might write much, and I should like to write much, in order to prove the truth of this position, and to refute the various and complicated arguments against it, which are on the lips of each one of us. We know that we are

to blame, and consequently we are always ready with a justification.

But, however much I wrote, however well I wrote, however correct I might be logically, I should not persuade a reader, if he used his reason to argue against me and his heart should remain cold. I fear this, I fear the pride of my own intellect, that my coldness may injure you.

And so I ask you, reader, even though for a time you set aside the activity of your mind, not to argue, nor to prove, but merely to question your heart. Who ever you are, however gifted, however kind to the men and women around you, in whatever condition you may be, can you be contented at your tea, your dinner, your work as a government employee, as an artist, a student, a physician, a teacher, if you hear or see at your doorstep a man cold, hungry, sick, or tormented?

No!

But here they are always with us — if not at our steps, then ten yards or ten miles away. They are here, and you know it!

And you cannot be satisfied, you cannot enjoy yourself, unless you rectify this state of things. In order that you may not see them at your door, you must shut yourself away from them, you must hold them at a distance by your coldness, or else go where they are not to be found. But they are everywhere.

And even if a place were found where you would not see them, you would not get away from your consciousness of the truth. How could you? You yourself know it, and the teaching of this book tells this to you: —

"Let yourself down to him who seems to you below but is really above; stand in line with those that are feeding the hungry, clothing the cold; fear nothing," there will be nothing worse, but much that is better in all directions. Stand in line, put your ignorant weak hands to the first task that will feed the hungry, clothe the cold; undertake manual labor, the struggle with nature: and you will feel for the first time the firm soil underneath

your feet; you will feel that you are at home, that you are free and strong; and you will experience the wholesome, unpoisoned pleasures which you will not find behind closed doors or drawn curtains.

You will recognize joys which you never have known before. You will know for the first time those simple, strong men and women, your brethren who far away from you, have hitherto been supporting you; and to your amazement you will see in them such virtues as you had not suspected before, you will see in them such modesty, such kindliness to you yourself, especially, as you will feel you have not deserved.

Instead of the scorn, the ridicule, which you expected, you will see such gentleness, such gratitude, such respect for you, because after you had lived all your days and despised them, you suddenly woke up and with unaccustomed hands wanted to help them.

You will see that what seemed to you an island on which you were sitting, having been sand from the sea that swallowed you up, is a swamp in which you were sinking; and that the sea which you feared is dry land on which you walk firmly, calmly, joyously, as could not be otherwise, because from the deception into which you did not go yourself, but were led into it, you have returned to the truth; from the deviation from God's will, you have returned to its fulfilment.

1888.

STOP AND THINK!

I

THE editor of a Paris review, thinking that the opinions of two celebrated writers on the state of mind of the present day would interest me, has sent me two extracts from French newspapers, one being a speech by M. Zola, delivered at the banquet of the General Students' Association, the other a letter from M. A. Dumas to the editor of the *Gaulois*.

These extracts did indeed interest me profoundly, both on account of their seasonableness and the renown of their authors, and because it would be difficult to find in current literature in a more succinct, vigorous, and brilliant form, an expression of the two fundamental forces, the resultant of which impels humanity along. I mean on the one hand the force of routine which tends to keep humanity in its present course, and on the other that of reason and love which impels it toward the light.

M. Zola disapproves of that faith in something vague and ill-defined which their new guides are recommending to the youth of France; and counsels them to believe in something which is neither clearer nor better defined, namely, science and work.

A little-known Chinese philosopher and founder of a religion, named Lao-Tze (the first and best translation of whose book, "The Way of Virtue," is that by Stanislas Julien), takes as the foundation of his doctrine the "tao," a word meaning "reason," "way," "virtue." If men follow the law of "tao," they will be happy. But the "tao," according to M. Julien's translation, is only attainable by "not-acting."

All the ills besetting mankind arise, according to Lao-Tze, not from man's neglect to do what is necessary, but because he does what is unnecessary, so that if men would practise what he calls "not-acting," they would be rid not only of their personal calamities, but also of those inherent in every form of government, the latter being the subject of which the Chinese philosopher particularly treats.

Lao-Tze's idea appears strange, but it is impossible not to agree with him if one considers what are the results from the activities of the great majority of the men of our century.

Let all men apply themselves to work, says M. Zola, and work will give them health and happiness, and will free them from the torment of the Infinite. Work, yes; but at what are we to work? Manufacturers and sellers of opium, tobacco, and brandy, every gambler on the Stock Exchange, all inventors and manufacturers of engines of destruction, all the military, all jailers and executioners, — all work, but it is evident that humanity would be the gainer if all these workers ceased their work.

But perhaps M. Zola's recommendation has reference only to such work as is inspired by science? As a matter of fact the purpose of the greater part of M. Zola's speech is to uphold science, which he thinks is being attacked. Well! From various unappreciated authors I am continually receiving pamphlets, treatises, and printed books and manuscripts, the results of their scientific work.

One has finally decided the question of the Christian gnosiology, another has written a book on the cosmic ether, a third has solved the social question, a fourth the Eastern question, a fifth edits a Theosophical Review, a sixth (in a thick volume) solves the knight's tour problem in chess.

All these people work assiduously and in the name of science, but I have no hesitation in saying that the time and work of my correspondents have been spent in a manner not only useless but even harmful, for they have

not been the only people whose labor has been spent on this useless work; thousands of people have been occupied in making the paper, the type, and machines needed to print their works, and in feeding, clothing, and housing these scientific laborers.

Work for science? But the word science is a term so vague and ill-defined that what some people consider to be science is considered by others to be utterly futile, and this is the case not only with outsiders but even with the priests of science themselves. While those savants who favor a spiritual explanation of life, look upon jurisprudence, philosophy, and even theology as the most necessary and important of sciences, the Positivists consider these very sciences as childish twaddle devoid of scientific value; and, *vice versa*, sociology, which the Positivists look upon as the science of sciences, is considered by the theologians, philosophers, and spiritualists as an arbitrary and useless collection of observations and assertions. But more than this, even in one and the same branch of philosophy or natural science, each system has ardent defenders and equally ardent detractors, equally competent, yet holding diametrically opposite opinions.

Finally, does not each year witness fresh scientific discoveries, which, after exciting the wonder of the mediocrities of the whole world, and bringing fame and fortune to their inventors, are eventually found to be nothing but ridiculous errors even by those who promulgated them?

We all know that what the Romans looked upon as science par excellence, as the most important of occupations, and one which showed how superior they were to the barbarians, was rhetoric, that is to say, an exercise which nowadays is regarded with derision, which with us does not even rank as a science. It is equally difficult for us to understand the state of mind of the learned during the Middle Ages, who were quite convinced that all science was centered in scholasticism.

Unless, then, our century be quite an exception, — which we have no right to suppose, — but little reflec-

tion is required to convince us that, among the subjects principally engrossing the attention of our learned men to-day, there are some which will be looked upon by our descendants as we now look upon the rhetoric of the ancients and the scholasticism of the Middle Ages.

II

M. Zola's speech is chiefly directed against certain leaders who are trying to direct the younger generation back to religious beliefs; for M. Zola, as a champion of science, looks upon himself as their opponent; but in reality such is not the case, for his reasoning is based upon the same foundation as that of his adversaries: on faith, as he himself admits.

It is a generally received opinion that religion and science are opposed to each other. And such is really the case, but only with reference to any given time. That is to say, what has been regarded by the people of one time as science very often becomes religion for their descendants. What is usually connoted by the term religion is generally the science of the past, while that which is called science is to a large extent the religion of the present.

We say that the statements of the Hebrews that the world was created in six days, that children are punished for the sins of their fathers, that certain maladies can be cured by the sight of a serpent, are the data of religion; while we call data of science the statements of our contemporaries that the world created itself while turning around a center which is everywhere, that all the various species arose from the struggle for existence, that criminals are the product of heredity, that there exist micro-organisms in the shape of commas which cause certain diseases. It is easy to see by reverting in imagination to the state of mind of an ancient Hebrew, that for him the creation of the world in six days, the wound-curing serpent, etc., served as the data of science at its highest degree of development, just as for a man of our

time do the laws of Darwin, the commas of Koch, heredity, etc.

And just as it was not exactly in the creation of the world in six days, the wound-curing serpent, etc., that the Hebrew believed, but rather in the infallibility of his priests, and hence in the truth of their assertions; even so the great majority of the cultured people of our time believe neither in the formation of the world by rotation, nor in heredity, nor in comma-like bacilli, but in the infallibility of their lay priests who are called scientists, who affirm whatever they pretend to know, with the same assurance as did the Hebrew priests.

I will even say that if the priests of old, amenable to no control save that of their colleagues, permitted themselves sometimes to digress from the truth merely for the pleasure of astonishing and mystifying their public, the priests of modern science have done as much, with equal effrontery.

The greater part of what is called religion is but the superstition of the past; the greater part of what is called science is no more than the superstition of the present day. The proportion of error and of truth is, I suspect, about the same in the one as in the other. Hence to work in the name of any belief, be it religious or scientific, is not only a doubtful means of ameliorating the life of mankind, but it is a dangerous proceeding which may produce more harm than good.

To consecrate one's life to the fulfilment of the duties imposed by religion, — prayers, communion, almsgiving; or, following the advice of M. Zola, to devote it to some scientific work, — is to run too great a risk, for one may find on the eve of one's death that the religious or scientific principle, in whose service one has spent one's whole life, is nothing but an absurd mistake!

Even before reading the speech in which M. Zola holds up work, whatever kind it may be, as a kind of virtue, I had always been astonished at the strange opinion (current especially in Western Europe) in regard to work. I always felt that it was excusable only in an irrational creature, such as the ant in the fable, to elevate work

to the rank of a virtue and to make a boast of it. M. Zola assures us that work makes men kind; the contrary has always been true in my experience. Without considering selfish work, which is always bad, the object of which is the well-being or aggrandizement of the worker, even "work for its own sake," the pride of the worker, renders both ants and men cruel. Which of us does not know these men, untouched by considerations of truth and kindliness, who are always so busy that they not only never have time to do good, but cannot even ask themselves whether their work is not harmful? You say to these people: "Your work is useless, perhaps even pernicious, for the following reasons; pause and consider them for a moment." They will not listen to you, but scornfully reply: "You men have leisure to reason about such matters, but what time have I for discussions? I have worked all my life and work does not wait; I have to edit a daily paper with a circulation of half a million; I have the army to organize, the Eiffel Tower to build, the Chicago Exhibition to arrange, to cut through the Isthmus of Panama, to make investigations on the subject of heredity, telepathy, or to find out the number of times such and such a word occurs in the works of such and such a classic author."

The most cruel of men, the Neros and the Peter the Greats, have been constantly active, never pausing or giving themselves a moment free from occupation or distraction.

Even if work is not a vice, it can from no point of view be looked upon as a merit.

Work can no more be considered a virtue than can nutrition; work is a necessity of which one cannot be deprived without suffering, and to elevate it to the rank of a merit is as monstrous as it would be to do the like for nutrition. The only explanation of this strange value attributed to work in our society is that our ancestors regarded laziness as an attribute of nobility, almost of merit, and that people of our time are still somewhat influenced by the reaction from that prejudice.

Work, the exercise of our organs, cannot be meritorious, for it is simply a physical necessity of man in common with all other animals, as is shown by a tethered calf galloping round and round, or, among ourselves, by the silly exercises to which rich and well-fed people of the leisured classes betake themselves, finding no better use for their mental faculties than reading novels and newspapers, or playing chess and cards, or for their muscles than gymnastics, fencing, lawn tennis, and horse-racing.

In my opinion, not only is work not a virtue, but in our defectively organized society it is more often a means of moral anæsthesia, just as are tobacco, wine, and other means of drowning thought and hiding from ourselves the disorder and emptiness of our lives; and it is precisely as such that M. Zola recommends work for young people.

III

There is a great difference between the letter of M. Dumas and the speech of M. Zola, without mentioning the external difference, namely, that the speech of M. Zola seems to court the approbation of the young men to whom it is addressed; whilst the letter of M. Dumas does not flatter young men, does not tell them that they are important persons and that everything depends on them (a notion which they ought never to cherish if they wish to be good for anything), but, on the contrary, points out to them their habitual faults, their presumption, and their levity. The principal difference between these two articles is that the speech of M. Zola aims at keeping men in the path they are in, by making them think that what they know is precisely what is necessary for them to know, and that what they are doing is exactly what they ought to do; whilst the letter of M. Dumas shows them that they are ignorant of the essentials of what they ought to know, and are not living as they should live.

The more men believe that they can be moved to a better state of things without effort of their own, by some external force acting of itself, whether religion or science, and that they have only to work on in the existing order, — with the more difficulty will this change be accomplished; and it is in this, above all, that the speech of M. Zola errs.

On the contrary, the more men believe that it only depends on themselves to modify their relations toward one another, and that they can do so when they will, by loving one another instead of tearing one another to pieces as they now do, the more will such change become possible. The more men allow themselves to follow this suggestion, the more will they be drawn to realize the prediction of M. Dumas. And in this lies the great merit of M. Dumas's letter.

M. Dumas does not belong to any party or to any religion; he has as little faith in the superstitions of the past as in those of the present, and it is just for this reason that he observes, that he thinks, and that he sees, not only the present but also the future, in the same way as those who in ancient times were called seers. It may appear strange to those who, when reading an author's works, see only the contents of his book and not the soul of the author, that M. Dumas — who wrote "La Dame aux Camélias" and "L'Affaire Clémenceau" — that this same Dumas sees into the future and prophesies. But, however strange it may seem, prophecy, though uttered not in the desert, nor by Jordan's banks, nor from the mouth of a hermit clothed in skins of beasts, but appearing in a daily paper on the banks of the Seine, — it is none the less prophecy.

The words of M. Dumas have all the characteristics of a prophecy: first, they are entirely opposed to the general ideas of the people in the midst of whom they are uttered; secondly, all who hear them feel their truth; and thirdly, above all, it urges men to realize what it foretells.

M. Dumas predicts that men, after having tried

everything, will begin seriously to apply to life the law of brotherly love, and that this change will come about sooner than one expects. The proximity of this change, even its possibility, may be disputed; but it is evident that, if it does come about, it will solve all contradictions, all difficulties, and will avert all the ills which the end of our century threatens.

The only objection, or rather the only question, that can be put to M. Dumas is: If love of our neighbor is possible to, and inherent in, human nature, why have so many thousand years passed (for the command to love God and one's neighbor is not a command of Christ, but dates back to Moses) during which men have known this means of happiness and yet have not practised it? What cause prevents the manifestation of a sentiment so natural and so beneficent to humanity?

It is evident that it is not enough to say: Love one another. That has been said for three thousand years; it has been continually repeated in all tones, from all platforms, religious and even secular, but men continue none the less to exterminate instead of love one another. In the present day no one can doubt that if men, instead of tearing one another to pieces, — each seeking his own happiness, that of his family, or that of his country, — would but help one another; if they would replace selfishness by love, and would organize their lives on the communistic instead of the individualistic principle (as the sociologists like to express it in their barbarous jargon); if they loved one another as each loves himself, if, at least, they did not do to others what they would not like done to them, as was said two thousand years ago, — the amount gained of that personal happiness which each man seeks would be greater, and human life in general would be reasonable and happy instead of being what it is now, a succession of contradictions and sufferings.

No one doubts but that if men continue to take away from one another the ownership of the land and the products of their labor, a retaliation by those who have been thus robbed must be expected, and that the op-

pressed will retake with violence and vengeance what they have been deprived of. Every one knows also that the preparations for war made by the different nations lead on to terrible massacres, to the ruin and degeneration of all the peoples who participate in this circle of armaments. No one doubts but that if the present order of things be prolonged for some dozens of years, the result will be ruin, imminent and general. We have only to open our eyes to see the abyss toward which we are advancing. But it seems that Christ's prophecy is fulfilled among the men of to-day; they have ears to be deaf with, and eyes to be blind with, they have reason to misunderstand with.

The men of to-day continue to live as they have always lived, and do not leave off doing what must inevitably lead to their ruin. Moreover, the men of our Christian society acknowledge, if not the religious law of love, at least the moral obligation of the Christian principle, "not to do to others what they would not that others do to them," but they do not act upon it. Evidently some secret but overwhelming reason prevents them from doing what is to their advantage — what would save them from the dangers that menace them, and what the law of their God and their conscience alike dictate to them. Are we to conclude that love applied to life is a chimera? If so, how is it that for so many centuries men have allowed themselves to be deluded by this unrealizable dream? It must be high time to recognize its futility. But mankind can neither resolve to follow the law of love in their lives nor to give up the idea.

Why is this? What is the reason of this contradiction, enduring so many centuries? It is not because men of our day lack either the desire or the possibility to do what is dictated to them, both by their common sense and by the danger of their position, and above all, by the law of that which they speak of as God and their conscience. But it is just because they are doing what M. Zola advises them to do: they are so busy, they are all so engrossed in work commenced long ago, and it is impossible for them to pause to collect their thoughts

and consider what they ought to be. All great revolutions in the life of men commence in thought. Let but a change take place in men's thoughts, and action will follow the direction of the thought as certainly as the ship follows the direction of the rudder.

IV

In the words of His first sermon Christ did not tell men to love one another (He taught this to His disciples later on), but, like John the Baptist before Him, He preached repentance, *μετάνοια*, that is to say, a change of opinion with regard to life: *μετανοεῖτε*, change your conception of life, said He, or you will all perish. The meaning of your life cannot consist in the pursuit of your personal well-being, or in that of your family or your nation, because that well-being can be attained only by detriment of that of your neighbor. Know then that the meaning of your life can lie only in fulfilling the will of Him who sent you into this life, and who demands from you, not the pursuit of your personal interests, but the accomplishment of His own purpose: the establishment of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Μετανοεῖτε, change your conception of life, or you will all perish, said He, eighteen hundred years ago; and, today, this is incessantly urged by all the contradictions and all the ills of our time, results of the fact that men have not heeded, and have not accepted the conception of life which he proposed to them. Μετανοεῖτε, said He, or you will all perish. And the alternative is still the same. The only difference is that now it is more pressing. If, two thousand years ago, at the time of the Roman Empire, even at the time of Charles V., or even before the Revolution and the Napoleonic wars, it was possible not to see the vanity, I will even say the absurdity, of attempting to insure personal happiness, the welfare of the family, the nation, or the State, by struggling against all who seek the same thing, — that illusion has now become absolutely impossible to any man who

will pause in his work, be it only for a moment, and reflect upon what he is, upon the state of the world about him, and upon what he ought to be. If, then, I were asked for the most important advice I could give, that which I considered to be the most useful to the men of our century, I should simply say: In the name of God, stop a moment, cease your work, look around you, consider what you are and what you ought to be, — think of the ideal.

M. Zola says that people should not aspire, or believe in a superior power, or trouble about the ideal. Perhaps M. Zola understands by the word "ideal," either the supernatural, that is to say, the theological rubbish about the Trinity, the Church, and the Pope, etc., or *the unexplained*, as he calls the vast forces of the universe into which we are plunged. And in this case men would do well to follow M. Zola's advice. But, in reality, the ideal is neither supernatural nor unexplained. On the contrary, it is the most natural of things; I will not say it is the most thoroughly explained, but it appeals to the human mind with more certainty than anything else.

The ideal in geometry is the perfectly straight line, and the circle the radii of which are equal; in science, it is exact truths; in morals, perfect virtue. Although all these things, straight line, exact truth, and perfect virtue alike, have never existed, not only are they more natural, more known, and more *explicable* than all our other knowledge; but they are the only things we truly and certainly do know.

It is commonly said that reality is that which exists, or in other words, only that which exists is real. The contrary is, however, the case; the true reality, that which we truly know, is that which never existed. The ideal is the only thing which we know with certainty, and it has never existed. It is only thanks to the ideal that we know anything at all, and that is why the ideal alone can guide mankind in their lives, both individually and collectively. The Christian ideal has been before us for eighteen centuries; it shines in our time with such intensity that it is extremely difficult to avoid seeing that

all our ills proceed from the fact that we do not accept its guidance; but the more difficult it becomes not to see this, the greater are the efforts made by some people to persuade us to do as they do, to close our eyes so as not to see it. In order to be absolutely certain to arrive safely in port, we ought, before all else, to throw overboard the compass, say they, and forge ahead. Men of our Christian society resemble people who, desiring to pull down some object which annoys them, drag at it in opposite directions, and have no time to agree as to the direction in which they ought to pull. It is only necessary that a man of our day should cease his activity for a moment and reflect, — comparing the demands of his reason and of his heart with the actual conditions of his life, — in order to perceive that his whole life and his every action are in incessant and outrageous contradiction to his reason and his heart. If you were to inquire separately of every civilized human being what are the most moral bases of his conduct, nearly every man would tell you that they are the Christian principles, or at any rate those of justice. In saying this men are sincere. If they acted according to their conscience, men would live as Christians; but it is only necessary to watch them to see that they live like wild beasts. So that for the great majority of men in the Christian world, the organization of their life is not the result of their way of seeing and feeling, but of certain forms which were once necessary, but which now only survive by reason of the inertia of social life.

V

If in past times, — when the evils produced by the pagan way of life were not so evident as now, and, more important still, the Christian principles were not so generally accepted, — men could consciously uphold the bondage of the workers, the oppression of man by man, penal law, and, above all, war, — it has become completely impossible at the present time to explain the *raison d'être* of all these institutions.

In order that men should change their way of living and feeling, they must first of all change their way of thinking; and in order that such a change should come about, men must stop and give their attention to what they ought to understand. To hear what those who wish to save them are shouting, men who run singing toward the precipice must cease their hubbub and stop short.

Let the people of our Christian society pause in their work and reflect for a moment on the state of their lives, and involuntarily they will be led to accept the conception of life given by Christianity; a conception so natural, so simple, and answering so completely the needs of the heart and mind of humanity, that it would arise almost spontaneously in the understanding of any one willing to liberate himself, were it but for a moment, from the entanglement in which he is held by the complications of his own work and the work of others.

For eighteen centuries the feast has been ready; but one man does not come because he has bought a piece of ground, another because he has married a wife, a third because he must go and try his oxen, a fourth because he is constructing a railway, a factory, doing missionary work, working in Parliament, in a bank, or at some scientific, artistic, or literary production. For two thousand years nobody has had the leisure to do what Jesus advised at the beginning of His ministry: to look around him, to consider the results of our work, and to ask himself: *What* am I? *For* what? Can it be that this force, which has produced me with my reason and my desire to love and be loved, has operated only in order to deceive me; so that, having imagined the aim of my life to be my personal well-being, — that my life belongs to me and that I have the right to dispose of it and the lives of other beings as I please, — I should arrive at the conviction that this personal, family, or national well-being cannot be attained; and that the more I strive to attain it, the more I should find myself in contradiction with my reason and the desire to love and be loved, and the more I should experience disillusionment and suffering? Is it not more probable that,

not having come into the world spontaneously, but by the will of Him who sent me, my reason and my desire to love and be loved have been given to guide me in the accomplishment of that will?

Once that *μετάνοια* has taken place in the thought of man, — a pagan and egoistic conception of life replaced by the Christian conception, — the love of one's neighbor will become more natural than strife and egoism are at present. And when once the love of one's neighbor has become natural to man, the new conditions of the Christian life will come about spontaneously, just as in a liquid saturated with salt the crystals commence to form the moment one ceases to stir it.

And in order that such a result should come about and that men should organize in conformity with their conscience, no positive effort is necessary; on the contrary, we have only to stop in the efforts we are now making. If man only employed the hundredth part of his energy, now spent entirely contrary to his conscience in material occupations, to elucidate as much as possible the data of his conscience, to express these as clearly as possible, to make them known, and above all to practise them, the change foretold by M. Dumas and by all the prophets would be accomplished much more quickly and easily than we think, and man would acquire that good which Jesus proclaimed in His good news: "Seek the Kingdom of Heaven and all other things will be added unto you."[1]

[1] This essay was written by Tolstoï in 1893, first in Russian and then (after a mutilated version had appeared in France) again in French. From the latter this version is made. — Tr.

GUY DE MAUPASSANT

IT was, I think, in 1881, that Turgenief, while visiting me, got a French book, entitled "Maison Tellier," out of his portmanteau and gave it to me.

"Read it some day," said he, with pretended indifference; just in the same way as, a year before, he had given me a number of "The Russian Wealth," containing a story by Garshin, then just beginning to write. As in Garshin's case, so now, he was evidently afraid of influencing me one way or the other, and wished to have my altogether unbiased opinion.

"It is by a young French writer," he said. "Look it over: it is not bad. He knows you, and greatly appreciates you," he added, as if wishing to propitiate me. "As a type, he reminds me of Druzhinin; he is like Druzhinin, an excellent son, a good friend, *un homme d'un commerce sûr*,[1] and, besides this, he associates with the working-people, guides them, helps them. Even in his relations with women he reminds me of Druzhinin." And Turgenief told me something astonishing, incredible, as to Maupassant's conduct in this respect.

That particular period, the year 1881, was for me the fiercest time of the inner reconstruction of my whole understanding of life, and in this reconstruction those employments called the fine arts, to which I had formerly given all my powers, had not only lost all their former importance in my eyes, but had become altogether obnoxious to me owing to the unnatural position they had hitherto occupied in my life, and which they generally occupy in the estimation of people of the wealthy classes.

[1] A man to be relied on.

Accordingly, I was not at all interested then in such works as the one recommended to me by Turgenief. But, in order to please him, I read the book.

Whilst reading the first story, "Maison Tellier," notwithstanding its improper and trifling subject, I could not but recognize in its author what is termed genius.

He possessed that special gift, called genius, which consists in the faculty of intense, strenuous attention, applied, according to the author's tastes, to this or that subject; and by means of which the possessor of this capacity sees the things to which he applies his attention in some new aspect overlooked by others. This gift of seeing what others do not see was evidently possessed by Maupassant. But, to judge by the little volume I read, he was unfortunately destitute of the chief of the three qualifications which, in addition to genius, are indispensable to a true work of art. These are: (1) a correct, that is, a moral, relation of the author to his subject; (2) perspicuity or beauty of expression (the two are identical); and (3) sincerity, *i.e.* an unfeigned feeling of love or hatred to the subject depicted. Of these three Maupassant possessed only the last two, and was utterly without the first. He had not a correct, that is, a moral, relation to the subjects he described.

Judging by what I read, I came to the conclusion that Maupassant possessed genius, that gift of attention revealing in the objects and facts of life properties not perceived by others; that he possessd a beautiful form of expression, uttering clearly, simply, and with charm what he wished to say; and that he possessed also the merit of sincerity, without which a work of art produces no effect, that is, he did not merely pretend to love or hate, but did indeed love or hate what he described. But, unhappily, being destitute of the first and perhaps most important qualification for a work of art, of a correct, moral relation to what he described — that is, lacking a knowledge of the difference between good and evil — he loved and described that which he should not have loved and described, and did not love that which he should have loved and described. Thus, in this

little volume, the author described with great minuteness and fondness how women seduce men, and men women; he even, as in "La Femme de Paul," referred to certain obscenities difficult to understand. And not only with indifference, but even with contempt, he described the country laboring people as he would animals.

This ignorance of the distinction between good and evil is especially striking in the story, "Une Partie de Campagne." In this, as a most charming and amusing joke, is related a minute account of how two gentlemen, rowing with bare arms in a boat, seduced, at the same time, one of them an elderly mother, the other a young girl, her daughter.

The sympathy of the author is evidently all the time so much on the side of these two villains, that he, I will not say ignores, but simply does not see what must have been experienced by the seduced mother and maiden daughter, by the father, and by the young man evidently engaged to the daughter. And, therefore, we not only have the revolting description of a disgusting crime represented as an amusing joke, but, moreover, the event itself is described falsely, in that only one side of the subject is presented, and that the most insignificant one, namely, the pleasure taken by the scoundrels.

In this same little volume there is a story, "Histoire d'une Fille de Ferme," which was specially recommended to me by Turgenief, and which specially displeased me by again this incorrect relation of the author to his subject. He evidently sees in all the working folk whom he describes, only animals rising no higher than sexual and maternal love, and therefore his descriptions produce an impression of incompleteness and artificiality.

Lack of understanding of the life and interests of the working people, and the representation of them as semi-brutes moved only by sensuality, spite, and greed, constitute two of the greatest and most serious deficiencies of most of the latest French authors, and, in their number, of Maupassant, who, not only in this story, but in

all those others in which he treats of the people, always describes them as coarse, dull animals at whom one can only laugh. Certainly, French writers ought to know the nature of their own people better than I. But, notwithstanding that I am a Russian and have not lived with French peasants, I still assert that in so representing their own people French authors are wrong, and that the French laboring men cannot be such as they represent. If France — the France we know — with her truly great men, and the valuable contributions with which these great men have enriched science, art, and social life, and have assisted the moral development of humanity; if *this* France exists, then, also, that laboring class on whose shoulders has been, and is, supported this France of great men, must consist, not of brutes, but of men of great mental capacity.

Therefore, I do not believe what is written in novels like "La Terre"[1] and in Maupassant's stories: just as I should not believe what I might be told concerning the existence of a beautiful house standing without foundations. It may well be that the virtues of the people are not so lofty as described to me in "La Petite Fadette" and "La Mare aux Diables."[2] Yet they exist — of that I am firmly persuaded. And a writer who portrays the people only as Maupassant does, describing with relish only the *hanches* and *gorges*[3] of Breton servant-girls, and alluding to the life of laboring men with abhorrence and scoffing, commits a great mistake from the artistic point of view, because he describes his subject only from one, and that the most uninteresting, physical side, utterly leaving out of sight the other and more important spiritual side where lies the essence of the matter.

On the whole, the reading of the little book given me by Turgenief left me altogether indifferent to the young writer.

So repugnant to me were the stories, "Une Partie de

[1] By Zola.
[2] Stories by George Sand.
[3] Hips and throats.

Campagne," "La Femme de Paul," and "L'histoire d'une Fille de Ferme," that I did not then remark the pretty story, "Le Papa de Simon," and the story, excellent in its description of the night, "Sur l'eau."

"Have we not," I thought, "in our time, when there are so many book-writing amateurs, a sufficiency of men of genius, who either do not know how to apply their gift, or else boldly apply it to what it is utterly wrong and unnecessary to describe?" And so I said to Turgenief. After which, I forgot all about Maupassant.

The first work of his I saw after that was "Une Vie," which some one advised me to read. This book immediately made me change my opinion of Maupassant, and from that time forward I read with interest everything signed by his name. "Une Vie" is an excellent novel; not only incomparably the best novel by Maupassant, but perhaps the best French novel, after Hugo's "Les Misérables." Besides a remarkable power of genius, of that peculiar strenuous attention applied to the subject, by which the author perceives quite new features in the life he describes; in this novel are united, almost in equal degree, all the three qualifications for a true work of art: namely, a correct, that is, a moral, relation of the author to his subject; a beautiful form of expression; and sincerity, that is, love toward that which the author describes. Here the purport of life no longer appears to the author as consisting in the adventures of various male and female libertines; here the subject represents, as the title indicates, life; the life of a ruined, innocent, amiable woman, disposed to all that is good, and ruined precisely by the same coarse animal sensuality, which, in his former stories, stood to the author as the central and dominant feature of life. Here all the sympathies of the author are on the side of good.

The form, beautiful in the first stories, is here brought to so high a pitch of perfection as, in my opinion, has been attained by no other French prose writer. And above all, the author does indeed love, and deeply love, that good family which he describes; and he does indeed hate the coarse debauchee who destroys the happiness

and peace of this lovable family, and, especially, ruins the life of the heroine.

And this is why all the events and actors in this tale are so lifelike and memorable. The weak, good-natured, debilitated mother; the upright, weak, attractive father; the still more attractive daughter in her simplicity, naturalness, and sympathy with all that is good; their mutual relations, their first journey, their servants and neighbors; the sly, coarsely sensual, avaricious, fastidious, insolent suitor, who, as usual, deceives the innocent girl by the customary sham idealization of the coarsest instinct; the marriage, Corsica, the beautiful descriptions of nature; the husband's coarse falseness, his seizure of power over the property, his quarrel with his father-in-law, the yielding of the good people, and the victory to insolence; the relations with the neighbors — all this is life itself in all its complexity and diversity. But not only is all this vividly and finely described; every part is, moreover, penetrated by a kind, pathetic tone which involuntarily infects the reader. One feels that the author loves this woman, loves her, not for her external form, but for her soul, for that which is good in her, that he commiserates with her, suffers with her; all of which is involuntarily transmitted to the reader. And the questions, "Why, for what end, is this fine being ruined?" "Ought it indeed to be so?" arise of themselves in the soul of the reader and compel him to examine into the meaning of human life.

Notwithstanding the false notes which here and there appear in the novel, such as, for example, the minute description of the young girl's skin, or the impossible and unnecessary details as to how, through the abbot's advice, the forsaken wife again becomes a mother (details which destroy all the charm of the heroine's purity), or the melodramatic and unnatural account of the injured husband's vengeance; notwithstanding these blemishes, not only did the novel appear to me to be excellent, but I saw behind it, no longer a talented chatterer and joker, not knowing and not wishing to know right from wrong (such as Maupassant had appeared to

me to be from the first book), but a serious man, examining deeply into life, and already beginning to see his way in it.

The next novel by Maupassant which I read was "Bel Ami."

"Bel Ami" is a very unclean book. The author here evidently gives himself full license in describing what attracts him, and at times seems to lose his dominant negative attitude toward his hero, and to pass over on to his side. But on the whole, "Bel Ami," like "Une Vie," has for basis a serious idea and sentiment. In "Une Vie" the fundamental idea is perplexity in the face of the cruel, meaningless, suffering life of an excellent woman ruined by a man's coarse sensuality; whereas here there is not only perplexity, but indignation at the prosperity and success of a coarse, sensual brute, who, by means of this same sensuality, shapes his career and attains a high position in society; indignation also at the depravity of the whole circle of society in which the hero attains success. In the former novel the author seems to ask: "Why, for what end, has this fine being been ruined? What was the cause?" Here, in this latter novel, he seems to answer: "All that is pure and good has perished and is perishing in our society, because this society is depraved, insane, horrible."

The last scene in the novel — the marriage, in a fashionable church, of the triumphant scoundrel, decorated with the order of the Legion of Honor, to a pure girl, daughter of an elderly and previously irreproachable mother, who has been seduced by him; a marriage blessed by a bishop, and regarded as something good and right by all present — expresses this idea with extraordinary force. Notwithstanding its encumbrance with unclean details (in which, it is to be deplored, the author seems to find pleasure) in this novel are seen the same serious demands from life.

Read the conversation of the old poet with Duroy after dinner (when leaving the Walters, if I remember rightly). The old poet bares life before his young friend, and exhibits it as it is, with its eternal and inevitable companion, death.

"It has already got hold of me, *la gueuse*,"[1] says he, alluding to death. "It has already shaken out my teeth, snatched away my hair, crippled my limbs, and is just ready to swallow me up. I am already in its power; it is only playing with me, like a cat with a mouse, knowing that I cannot escape. Fame? riches? — what good are they, since with these one cannot buy a woman's love. For it is only a woman's love that is worth living for. And death takes that away. Takes away that; then health, strength, and life itself. It is the lot of every one. And there is nothing more."

Such is the meaning of the words of the aged poet. But Duroy, the successful lover of all the women who please him, is so full of sensual energy and strength that he both hears and does not hear, understands and does not understand, what has been said. He hears and understands, but the source of sensual life in him gushes out from him with such power that this unquestionable truth, while predicting the same end for him, does not disturb him.

It is the presentation of this inner contradiction in life, which, in addition to the satirical value of the novel, constitutes its chief significance. This same idea gleams in the fine scene of the death of the consumptive journalist. The author puts to himself the question: "What is this life? How settle this contradiction between the love of life and the knowledge of inevitable death?" And he does not answer. He seems to seek, to pause, and does not decide either one way or the other. And therefore, in this novel also, the author's moral relation to life continues to be correct.

But in the succeeding novels this moral relation to life begins to be confused. The appreciation of the phenomena of life begins to waver, to grow obscure, and in the last novels it is completely perverted.

In "Mont-Oriol," Maupassant seems to unite the subjects of the two preceding novels and to repeat himself. Notwithstanding the fine descriptions, full of subtle humor, of a fashionable watering-place and the

[1] The old hag.

activity of the doctors in it, we have here the same debauchee, Paul, as trivial and merciless as the husband in "Une Vie"; and the same deceived, ruined, meek, feeble, lonely — always lonely — sympathetic woman, and the same impassive triumph of pettiness and triviality as "Bel Ami."

The idea is the same, but the moral attitude of the author toward what he describes is already much lower, lower than in "Une Vie" especially. The author's inner appreciation of right and wrong begins to get confused. Notwithstanding his abstract wish to be impartially objective, the scoundrel Paul evidently has all his sympathy. Accordingly, the love story of this Paul, and his attempts at and success in seduction, produce a discordant impression. The reader does not know what the author intends; whether he wishes to show all the emptiness and vileness of Paul (who in one scene unconcernedly turns away from and insults a woman merely because her waist is spoiled by her pregnancy with his child); or, on the contrary, to show how pleasant and easy it is to live as did this Paul.

In the succeeding novels, "Pierre et Jean," "Fort comme la Mort," and "Notre Cœur," the moral attitude of the author toward the personages of his stories becomes yet more confused, and in the last named disappears altogether. All these novels bear the seal of indifference, haste, artificiality, and above all, again that same absence of a correct moral relation to life which was evident in the author's first writings. This begins precisely with the time when Maupassant's reputation as a fashionable author had become established, and he had fallen a victim to that temptation, so dreadful in our time, to which every celebrated writer is subjected, and especially one so attractive as Maupassant. On the one hand is the success of his first novels, the praise of the press, and the flattery of society, especially of women; on the other, the continually increasing amount of remuneration (never, however, keeping up with the continually increasing expenses); and yet further the insistent demands of the editors, who, outbidding each

other, beseechingly flatter the author, and, no longer considering the merits of the works offered, accept enthusiastically everything signed by a name now established with the public. All these temptations are so great that they evidently turn his head, and he succumbs to them. He continues to elaborate the form of his novels as well as before, sometimes even better. He even loves and hates what he describes, but no longer loves it because it is good and moral, *i.e.* loved by all, nor hates it because it is evil and hated by all, but only because this or that accidentally pleases or displeases him.

From the time of "Bel Ami," this stamp of hurriedness, and, still more, of artifice, is upon all Maupassant's novels. Henceforth he forsakes the method of his first two novels: he no longer takes as the basis of them certain demands, and on that ground describes the conduct of his character, but writes his novels as do all the common hack novelists; that is, he invents the most interesting and pathetic or the most contemporary persons and situations, and of them composes his novel, adorning it with all those observations which he has had the opportunity of making, and which fit into the framework of the story, and does not in the least trouble himself as to how the events described relate to the demands of morality. Such are "Pierre et Jean," "Fort comme la Mort," and "Notre Cœur."

However much, in French novels, we may have become accustomed to read about "the married life of three," about the ever present lover whose existence is known to every one except the husband, it still remains altogether incomprehensible to us how it should happen that all husbands are always fools, cheated and ridiculous, whereas all lovers, who in the end themselves marry and become husbands, not only are neither ridiculous nor deceived, but are heroic. And it is even less comprehensible how all women are depraved, and yet all mothers saintly.

Yet it is upon these most unnatural and unlikely, and above all deeply immoral, ideas, that "Pierre et Jean" and "Fort comme la Mort" are founded. Therefore,

the sufferings of the characters in these novels affect us but little. The mother of Pierre and Jean, who was able throughout her life to deceive her husband, calls forth little sympathy when she is obliged to confess her sin to her son; and still less, when she justifies herself by saying that she could not but make use of the opportunity of happiness which presented itself. Yet less can we sympathize with the man in "Fort comme la Mort," when, after all his life deceiving his friend and debauching his friend's wife, he is distressed by not being able, in consequence of his old age, to debauch his mistress's daughter also.

The last novel, "Notre Cœur," has no inner purpose but the description of various kinds of sexual love. We find described a satiated, idle libertine, who knows not what he wants, and who at one time lives with a woman as depraved as, and even more depraved than, himself (she not even having the excuse of sensuality, being a mentally depraved woman); and at another time forsakes her and lives with a servant; and then returns to the former, and, as it appears, lives with both. In "Pierre et Jean" and "Fort comme la Mort," there are still some touching scenes; but this last novel, "Notre Cœur," excites only disgust.

The problem in Maupassant's first novel, "Une Vie," stands thus:—"Here is a human being, good, intelligent, lovable, inclined toward all that is good; and this being, for some reason or other, is sacrificed, first, to a coarse, fastidious, stupid, bestial husband, and, after that, to a similar son. And she perishes aimlessly, having given nothing to the world. Why is this?" The author thus puts the question, and, as it were, gives no answer. But the whole of his novel, all his feeling of sympathy with his heroine and condemnation of that which caused her ruin, is a sufficient answer to his question. If there be one man who has understood her suffering and expressed it, then it is already redeemed; as Job put it to his friends, when they complain that no one will know of his sufferings. If the suffering is discovered, understood, then it is redeemed. So here, the author has

discovered, understood, and revealed to men this suffering. And the suffering is redeemed, for, once understood by men, it will sooner or later be put an end to.

In the next novel, "Bel Ami," the question stands, not, "Why do the righteous suffer?" but, "Why do the unrighteous get wealth and fame?" and, "What are wealth and fame, and how are they obtained?" As before, the problem carries with it its own answer; that answer being the denunciation of all that is so highly prized by the crowd of men. The subject of the second novel is still serious, but the moral relation of the author to the subject he describes already weakens considerably, and whereas in the first novel, spots of sensuality which spoil it appear only here and there, in "Bel Ami" these spots multiply, and many chapters are filled with dirt alone, which seems to please the author.

In the next, "Mont-Oriol," the question: "Why, wherefore, the suffering of a worthy woman, and the success and happiness of a wild debauchee?" is no longer put; and it seems tacitly assumed that so it should be. And no longer are any moral demands perceptible; but, without the least necessity, and uncalled for by any artistic consideration, there appear dirty, sensual descriptions. As an example of this violation of artistic taste springing from the incorrect relation of the author to his subject, the minute description in this novel of the heroine in her bath is specially striking. This description has no object whatever, it is connected with neither the external nor inner purpose of the novel.

"Bubbles appear on the pink flesh."

"Well, what of that?" asks the reader.

"Nothing," answers the author. "I describe it because I like such descriptions."

In the next two novels, "Pierre et Jean" and "Fort comme la Mort," no moral attitude at all is perceptible. Both novels are constructed upon vice, deceit, and falsehood, which bring the actors into tragical situations.

In the last novel, "Notre Cœur," the position of the actors is most monstrous, wild, and immoral; and they no longer struggle with anything, but only seek enjoy-

ments, vain, sensual, and sexual: and the author appears to sympathize with their inclinations. The only deduction that can possibly be drawn from this last novel is, that the greatest happiness in life is sexual intercourse, and that, therefore, one must secure this happiness in the pleasantest possible way.

The immoral relation to life is yet more striking in the novelette, "Yvette." The subject of this work, awful in its immorality, is as follows: A beautiful girl, innocent in soul, but depraved in the manners she has learnt in the dissolute circle of her mother, leads a libertine into error. He falls in love with her, but, imagining that the girl knowingly chatters the obscene nonsense she has learnt in the society of her mother, and which she merely repeats, parrot-like, without understanding it, — imagining that the girl is already depraved, he coarsely proposes to her an immoral union. This proposal terrifies, insults her (for she loves him); it opens her eyes to her own position and that of her mother, and she suffers deeply. This profoundly touching scene is beautifully described: the collision between a beautiful, innocent soul and the depravity of the world. And here one might have stopped, but the author, without any external or inner necessity, continues his story, making this man penetrate to the girl at night and debauch her. It is evident that the author, in the early part of the novel, was on the side of the girl, but in the later part he suddenly goes over to the side of the libertine. One impression destroys the other. And the whole novel falls to pieces; crumbles like bread which has not been kneaded.

In all his novels after "Bel Ami" (I am not now alluding to his short stories, which are his chief merit and glory; of them, later), De Maupassant has evidently submitted to the theories now reigning, not only in his Parisian circle, but everywhere among artists; theories that for a work of art, is not only unnecessary to have any clear conception of what is right and what is wrong; but that, on the contrary, the artist must totally ignore all moral questions, there even being a certain artistic

merit in his so doing. According to his theory, the artist may, or should, represent that which is true to life, that which really is; that which is fine, and therefore pleases him; and even that which may be useful as material for "science"; but that to take into consideration questions as to what is moral or immoral, right or wrong, is not the artist's business.

I remember a celebrated painter showing me a picture of his representing a religious procession. It was beautifully painted, but no relation of the artist to his work was perceptible.

"Now tell me, do you regard these ceremonies as good, and necessary to be carried out, or not?" I asked him.

With some condescension to my simplicity, he told me he did not know about that, and did not think it necessary to know; his business was to represent *life*.

"But at least you sympathize with this?"

"I cannot say I do."

"Well, do you, then, dislike these ceremonies?"

"Neither the one nor the other," answered, with a smile of compassion at my silliness, this modern, profoundly cultured artist, who represented life without understanding its purpose, neither loving nor hating its phenomena. And so, it is to be regretted, thought Maupassant.

In his preface to "Pierre et Jean," he says that the writer is usually bidden to "Console me, amuse me, sadden me, touch my heart, make me muse, make me laugh, make me tremble, make me weep, make me think. Only some chosen minds bid the artist compose something beautiful in the form which most agree with your temperament."[1]

It was to gratify this demand of "chosen minds" that Maupassant wrote his novels, naïvely imagining that what is regarded as fine in his circle is indeed that beauty which art must serve.

And in the circle in which Maupassant moved, that beauty which has been, and is, regarded as necessarily to be served by art is principally woman, and sexual

[1] *Faites moi quelque chose de beau dans la forme qui vous conviendra le mieux d'après votre tempérament.*

intercourse with her: woman young and pretty, woman for the most part stripped bare. It was so held, not only by all Maupassant's comrades in "art" — painters and sculptors, novelists and poets — but also by philosophers, teachers of the rising generation. Thus the celebrated Renan, in his work, "Marcus Aurelius," condemning Christianity for not understanding feminine beauty, speaks plainly as follows: "The fault of Christianity is well disclosed; it is too exclusively moral, it has altogether sacrificed beauty. Whereas, in the eyes of a complete philosophy, beauty, far from being a mere superficial advantage, a danger, an inconvenience, is a gift of God, like virtue. It is as worthy as virtue. A beautiful woman expresses one aspect of the divine purpose, one of God's aims, as effectively as a man of genius, or a virtuous woman. She knows this, and hence her pride. She instinctively feels the infinite treasure which she carries in her body; she well knows that, without cleverness, without talent, without any particular virtue, she counts amongst the highest of God's manifestations. And why prohibit her from advantageously exhibiting the gift which has been awarded her, prohibit her from mounting the diamond which she has received?

"Woman, in embellishing herself, accomplishes a duty; she practises an art, an exquisite art, in a sense the most fascinating of arts. Do not let us be led astray by the smile which certain words provoke in the frivolous (!) Mankind awards the palm of genius to the artistic Greek, who knew how to solve that most delicate of problems, the adornment of the human body, which is to adorn perfection itself; and yet some people wish to see only an affair of rags in the attempt to further God's finest work, woman's beauty. Woman's toilette, with all its delicacies, is, in its way, high art.

"Epochs and nations which know how to succeed in this are the great epochs and the great nations. The history of Christianity shows that by excluding this species of art it postponed the full development of the social ideal which it conceived to a much later period,

when the revolt of men of the world had broken the narrow yoke primitively imposed upon the sect by an exalted fanaticism." [1]

So that, in the opinion of this leader of the young generation, it is only now that the French milliners and hair-dressers have corrected the fault committed by Christianity, and have reëstablished beauty in its true and elevated position.

In order that there should be no doubt as to what we should understand him to mean by beauty, the same celebrated writer, historian, and man of science, wrote the drama, "L'Abbesse de Jouarre," in which he showed that sexual intercourse with woman constitutes an elevated and fine way of serving this beauty. In this drama, which strikes one by its absence of talent, and especially by the coarseness of the conversations between D'Arcy and the Abbesse, where in the first words it becomes evident what kind of love this gentleman discusses with the supposedly innocent and highly moral maiden, who is not in the least shocked — in this drama it is shown that the most highly moral people, in full view of the death to which they are condemned, a few hours before death, cannot find anything better to do than to indulge their animal passion.

So that, in the society in which Maupassant grew up and was educated, the representation of feminine beauty and of sex-love, quite seriously, as a thing long ago admitted and decided by the cleverest and most learned men, was, and is, regarded as the true object of the highest art, of "*le grand art.*"

It is to this very theory, dreadful in its absurdity, that De Maupassant subjected himself when he became a fashionable writer. And, as was to be expected, this false ideal led him, in his novels, into a series of mistakes, and into work weaker and more weak.

In this appears the essential difference between the demands of the novel and of the short story. The novel's object, even its surface object, is the description of one full human life, or of many; and therefore the

[1] "Marc Aurèle," p. 555.

novel writer must have a clear and firm idea of what is right and what is wrong in life.

This De Maupassant had not; on the contrary, according to the theory he held, such was regarded undesirable. Had he been a novelist like some talentless writers of sensual novels, he would, being without genius, quietly have described what was wrong as being right, and his novels would have been full and interesting for people of the same views as himself. But De Maupassant had genius, *i.e.* he saw things in their essentials, and therefore involuntarily discovered truth — he involuntarily saw the evil in that which he wished to consider good.

This is why, in all his novels except the first, his sympathies continually waver. At one moment he represents wrong as being right; at another, he admits that wrong is wrong, and right is right; at another, again, he keeps shifting from the one standpoint to the other. And this destroys the very essence of every artistic impression, the framework on which it is built. People little sensitive to art often think that a work of art possesses unity when the same personages act in it from beginning to end, when all is built on one and the same fundamental plan of incidents, or when the life of one and the same man is described. This is a mistake; and the unity appears true only to the superficial observer. The cement which binds together every work of art into a whole and thereby produces the effect of lifelike illusion, is not the unity of persons and places, but that of the author's independent moral relation to the subject. In reality, when we read or examine the art-work of a new author, the fundamental questions which arise in our mind are always of this kind: "Well, what sort of a man are you? What distinguishes you from all the people I know, and what information can you give me as to how we must look upon our life?" Whatever the artist depicts, whether it be saints or robbers, kings or lackeys, we seek and see only the soul of the artist himself. And if he be an established writer, with whom we are already acquainted, the question is no longer: "Who are you?" but, "Well, what more can you tell

me that is new? From what standpoint will you now illuminate life for me?" Therefore, a writer who has not a clear, definite, and fresh view of the universe, and especially a writer who does not even consider this necessary, cannot produce a work of art. He may write much and beautifully, but a work of art will not result. So it was with De Maupassant in his novels.

If, in his first two novels, and especially in the first, he had an evident and firm sympathy for what is good and dislike for what is evil, it was for two reasons. Firstly, because he evidently heartily loved and respected that person who had served as the prototype of his heroine in "Une Vie," and heartily hated that living or collective personage which served as a model for Duroy (in which he was himself partly personified). Secondly, because in his first novel he had not yet become a fashionable writer, had not succumbed to all the snares of this position, and therefore did not as yet hold the theory, dominant in his circle, that the object of art consists only in making "*quelque chose de beau.*"

But when he did begin to write his novels according to this theory, then involuntarily took place what occurred in "Yvette" and in "Notre Cœur," namely, a contradictory estimation of the conduct of his personages. The author does not know whom he should love, and whom hate; therefore neither does the reader. And, not knowing this, the reader takes no interest in the events described. And therefore with the exception of the first two (strictly speaking, excepting only the first one), all the novels of De Maupassant, as novels, are weak; and had De Maupassant left us only these, he would have been merely a remarkable illustration of how a brilliant genius may perish on account of the abnormal society in which it is developed, and those false theories about art which are invented by people who do not love art and therefore do not understand it. But, fortunately, De Maupassant wrote short stories in which he did not subject himself to the false theory he had accepted; writing, not "*quelque chose de beau*," but what touched or revolted his moral feeling. And in these stories (not in all, but in the best

of them), it is observable how this moral feeling grew in the author, and how by degrees, and unconsciously, that which formerly constituted the chief meaning and happiness of his life was for him dethroned, and assessed at its true value.

And the astonishing capacity of every man of real genius, if only he does not do violence to himself under the influence of false theory, lies precisely in this: that genius teaches its possessor, leads him forward on the road of moral development, and makes him love that which deserves love, and hate that which deserves hatred. An artist is only an artist because he sees things, not as he wishes to see them, but as they are. The possessor of genius, the man, may fall into error; but genius, if only free rein be given it as De Maupassant has given it rein in his stories, will disclose, undrape, the object to him; will make him love it if it deserve love, and hate it if it deserve hatred. With every true artist, when, under the influence of his circle, he begins to represent that which he ought not to represent, there happens what happened to Balaam, who, wishing to bless, cursed what should be cursed, and, wishing to curse, blessed what should be blessed; he will involuntarily do, not what he wishes, but what he should do. And this happened in the case of De Maupassant.

There has hardly been another writer who so sincerely thought that all the welfare, all the meaning of life, is in women, in love, and who with such a power of passion described, from all sides, woman and her love; and there has hardly ever been a writer who with such clearness and precision has shown all the awful phases of that same thing which seemed to be highest and to afford the greatest welfare in life. The more he fathomed the question the more it revealed itself; all coverings fell off from it, and left only its awful consequences and its yet more awful essence.

Read of the idiot son; of the night with a daughter in "L'Hermite"; of the sailor with his sister in "Le Port"; read "Champ d'Olives," "La Petite Roque," "Miss Harriet," "Monsieur Parent," "L'Armoire";

read the marriage in "Sur l'Eau"; and, last utterance of all, "Un Cas de Divorce." That which Marcus Aurelius advised, namely, the invention of a means of destroying in one's imagination the attractiveness of this sin; this, in bright artistic images that overturn one's soul, De Maupassant achieves. He wished to praise this love, but the more he examined it the more he cursed it. He cursed it for those calamities and sufferings which it carries with it, for its disappointments, and, above all, for that counterfeit of true love, that deceit, that illusion in it, by which the more confidently a man addicts himself to it the profounder grows his suffering.

A powerful moral growth in the author during his literary activity is written in indelible letters in these exquisite short stories, and in his best book, "Sur l'Eau."

Not only in this dethronement of sexual love (involuntary, and therefore so much the more complete) is this moral growth of the author seen; it is seen in all those increasingly higher moral demands which he applies to life.

Not in sexual love alone does he see the innate contradiction between the demands of the animal and rational man; he sees it in all the organization of the world.

He sees that the world as it is, the material world, is not only not the best of worlds, but, on the contrary, might be quite different (this idea is wonderfully expressed in "Horla"), and that it does not satisfy the demands of reason and love; he sees that there is some other world, or at least, the demand for such another world, in the soul of man.

He is tormented, not only by the unreasonableness of the material world and its ugliness, but by its unlovingness, its disunity. I do not know a more heartrending cry of despair from a strayed man feeling his loneliness, than the expression of this idea in that most exquisite story, "Solitude."

The thing that most tormented De Maupassant, to which he returns many times, is the painful state of loneliness, spiritual loneliness, of man, of that bar which

stands between man and his fellows; a bar which, as he says, is the more painfully felt, the nearer the bodily connection.

What then torments him, and what would he have? What will destroy this bar? What suppress this loneliness? Love. Not that love of woman, a love with which he is disgusted; but pure, spiritual, divine love.

And it is that which De Maupassant seeks; it is toward this savior of life long ago plainly disclosed to man, that he painfully strives amid those fetters in which he feels himself bound.

He cannot yet give name to what he seeks; he would not name it with his lips, not wishing to defile his holy of holies. But his unexpressed yearning, shown in his dread of loneliness, is so sincere that it infects and attracts one more strongly than many and many a sermon about love pronounced only with the lips.

The tragedy of De Maupassant's life is that, being in the most monstrous and immoral circle, he by the force of his genius, that extraordinary light which was in him, had struggled out of the views of that circle and was already near to deliverance, already breathing the air of liberty. But, having spent his last force upon this struggle, not able to make one more effort, he perished unfreed.

The tragedy of this ruin consists in that it continues even now for the majority of so-called educated men of our time.

Men at large have never lived without the conception of a meaning in their life. Always and everywhere there have appeared in the front highly gifted men — prophets, as they are called — who explained to men this meaning and purport of life; and always the ordinary, average men, who have not the strength to make the discovery for themselves, have followed that explanation of life which their prophets have discovered for them.

Our present conception has been, eighteen hundred years ago, revealed by Christianity, simply, clearly, unerringly, and joyously, as is proved by the life of all those who have accepted it and followed that course in life which results from this conception.

But there have appeared those who misinterpret this teaching so that it has become meaningless. And now people are placed in the dilemma of either accepting Christianity as interpreted by Orthodoxy, — "Lourdes," the Pope, the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception, and so forth, — or of going on with life according to the teachings of Renan and those like him; that is, living without any direction or understanding of life, addicting themselves only to their carnal desires while they are strong, and to their habits when these desires weaken.

People, ordinary people, choose one or the other, sometimes both — first dissoluteness, then orthodoxy. And whole generations live thus, shielding themselves with various theories, invented, not to disclose the truth, but to conceal it. And ordinary, and, more especially, dull people, are content.

But there are others — not many, they are rare — such as was De Maupassant, who themselves with their own eyes see things as they are, see their significance, see the contradictions in life concealed from others, vividly represent to themselves that to which these contradictions must inevitably lead them, and look around them for solutions. They seek these solutions everywhere except where they are to be found, namely, in Christianity; because Christianity appears to them to be an outlived absurdity, repelling them by its deformity. And vainly trying of themselves to discover these solutions, they come to the conviction that solutions do not exist; that it is inherent in life always to carry in oneself these insoluble contradictions. And having come to such a decision, if these people are feeble, unenergetic natures, they put up with such meaningless life; they are even proud of their position, counting their ignorance as a virtue, as a sign of culture. But if they are such energetic, truthful, and talented natures as was De Maupassant, they do not endure this, but in one way or another get out of this absurd life.

In a similar way, people athirst in the wilderness might search everywhere for water except near to those men, who, standing round the spring, defile it, and offer

stinking mire instead of the water which is unceasingly streaming out beneath. In such a position was De Maupassant. He could not believe, it evidently never even entered his head, that the truth he sought had long ago been found, and was so near him. But neither could he believe that man could live in such contradiction as that in which he felt himself encompassed.

Life, according to those theories in which he was educated, which environed him, which were corroborated by all the lusts of his young and physically strong being, — life consists in pleasures of which woman with her love is the chief, and in the double, again reflected, delight of depicting this love and exciting it in others. All this would be well; but, upon examining these delights, amid them appear things quite foreign, hostile to this love and this beauty. Woman, for some reason, is disfigured; she becomes pregnant, and repulsively gives birth to her child; then come the children, undesired children; then deceits, cruelties; then moral sufferings; then mere old age; and then death.

Moreover, is such beauty indeed beauty? And why is all this so? It might be well if one could arrest life, but life advances. And what does this mean? "Life advances" means that the hair drops out, becomes gray; decayed teeth, wrinkles, offensive breath. Even before all ends, everything becomes dreadful, repulsive. Daubed rouge, powder, perspiration, odor, deformity appear. Where, then, is that which I served? Where is beauty? For in that is all. It is gone. There is nothing left. No life.

But not merely is there no life in what seemed to be life; one begins oneself to forsake life, one weakens, loses one's beauty, decomposes; others under one's eyes snatch away those delights in which was all the good of life. Nor is this all. Some sort of possibility of another life begins to glimmer on the mind, something more, some other kind of union with men, with all the world; one that does not admit of all these deceits; a something which cannot by any means be broken; which is true, and always beautiful. .... But

this cannot be. It is only the tempting vision of an oasis, of which we know that it does not exist, and that desert sand is all around.

De Maupassant attained that tragic moment in life when the struggle began between the falsehood of the life about him and the true life of which he began to be conscious. The first throes of spiritual birth had already commenced in him.

And it is these anguishes of birth that he expressed in his best work, especially in his short stories.

Had it been his, not to die in the anguish of birth, but to be born, he would have given us great instructive works; but, as it is, what he has given us in his birth struggle is much. Let us therefore be thankful to this powerful, truthful man for what he has given us.

WHEREIN IS TRUTH IN ART?

PREFACE TO A COLLECTION

"*O generation of vipers! how can you, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. A good man out of the good treasury brings forth good things, but an evil man out of the evil treasury brings forth evil. But I say unto you that for every idle word which men shall speak, they shall give account in the day of judgment.*

"*For by thy words shalt thou be justified and by thy words shalt thou be condemned.*" — MATTHEW xii. 34–37.

IN this book, besides stories in which veritable events are described, there are collected histories, traditions, tales, legends, fables, fairy tales of the kind composed and written for the edification of the people.

We have selected such as we consider consonant with the teaching of Christ, and therefore consider good and true.

Many persons and especially children, in reading a story, a fairy tale, a legend, or a fable, ask, first of all: Is what is written true? and, frequently, if they find that what was described could not have happened, they say: That is an idle invention and it is not true.

Persons who judge in this way judge unjustly.

It is not he who knows only what has been, what is, and what will be, that knows the truth, but he who knows what should be in accordance with God's will.

It is not he who only describes how a thing was, and what this, that, and the other man did, that writes the truth, but he that shows what men are doing well, that is to say, in accordance with God's will, and what men are doing ill, that is, against God's will.

The truth — that is the way. Christ said: *I am the way and the truth and the life.*

And therefore it is not the man that keeps his eyes

fastened on the ground that knows the truth, but he that knows by the sun where he is going.

All literary works are good and needful, not when they describe what has taken place, but when they show what ought to be; not when they tell what men have done, but when they set a value on what is right and wrong, when they show men the one strait and narrow way of God's will leading to life.

In order to show this way it is impossible to describe only what has taken place in the world. The world lies sunken in evil and in temptations. If you want to describe the world as it is, then you must describe much falsehood, and there will be no truth in your words. In order that there should be truth in what you describe, you must write, not what is, but what ought to be — describe, not the truth of what is, but the truth of God's kingdom which is near at hand, but not yet come to us.

Hence it results that there are mountains of books in which it says just what has taken place or might have taken place, but all these books are lies, if those that wrote them do not themselves know what is good, and what is bad and do not know, and do not show, the only way that leads men to the kingdom of God. And it happens that there are fairy tales, parables, fables, legends which describe such marvels as never have taken place, and never could take place, and these legends, fairy tales, and fables are true because they point out what God's will always has been, is, and will be, point out what the truth of God's kingdom consists in.

There may be a book — and there are many, many of such novels and stories — in which it is described how a man lives for his passions, torments himself, torments others, endures perils, privation, uses craft, struggles with others, escapes from poverty; and in the sequel is united with the object of his love, and becomes distinguished, rich, and happy. Such a book, even if all that is in it describes things exactly as they existed, and even if there was nothing improbable in it, would nevertheless be false and misleading, because a man living

for himself and his passions, however beautiful his wife might be, and however rich and distinguished he were, could not be happy.

But there might be some legend of Christ and His apostles wandering through the earth and coming to a rich man who would not receive Him, and coming to a poor widow and she took Him in, and then he might command a barrel of gold to come to the rich man, and might send a wolf to the poor widow to devour her last calf, and it might prove a blessing to the widow and a misfortune to the rich man.

Such a story is wholly improbable because nothing of what is described in it ever took place or could have taken place; but it is all true because in it is shown what always should be, in what good consists, in what evil, and toward what a man ought to strive in order to fulfil God's will. Whatever miracles are described, whatever wild beasts talk in human speech, whatever self-flying carpets bear people through the air — legends and allegories and fairy tales will be true if the truth of the kingdom of God is in them.

But if there is none of this truth, let all that is in it be ever so well authenticated, it will all be falsehood, because the truth of the kingdom of God is not in it. Christ Himself spoke in parables and His parables have remained eternally true. He only adds, "Beware how you hear."

1887.

PREFACE TO AMIEL'S JOURNAL

A YEAR and a half ago, I had the privilege of reading Amiel's book — "Fragments d'un journal intime." I was struck by the significance and depth of the subject, the beauty of the thought, and, above all, the sincerity of the book. In reading it I made note of those passages that especially struck me. My daughter undertook to translate these passages, and thus arose these extracts from Amiel's Private Journal; that is, extracts from extracts of Amiel's very voluminous, unprinted journal kept by him from day to day in the course of thirty years.

Henri Amiel was born in 1821, in Geneva, and was early left an orphan. Having completed a course of higher education in Geneva, Amiel went abroad and then spent some years in the universities of Heidelberg and Berlin. After his return to his own country in 1849, though only twenty-eight years old, he received the appointment in the Geneva Academy, first as Professor of Æsthetics and then of Philosophy, and there he remained until his death.

Amiel's whole life was spent in Geneva, where he died in 1881, in no wise distinguished from the great number of those very ordinary professors who, mechanically compiling their lectures from the latest books in their specialty, likewise mechanically repeat them to their hearers, and from the still larger number of unrestrained versifiers who offer their unnecessary but still salable wares to journals having a circulation of tens of thousands. Amiel had not the slightest success either

in teaching or in the domain of literature. He was nearing old age when he wrote the following about himself: —

"What have I been able to extract from the talents which were given to me, from the peculiar conditions of my half-century life? Are all my scribblings, collected together, my correspondence, *these thousands of sincere pages*, my lectures, my articles, my verses, my various memoranda, anything else than dry leaves? To whom and to what have I ever been of any use? Will my name last one day longer than I, and will it mean anything to any one? — An empty life." [1]

After Amiel's death two well-known French authors wrote about him and his diary: his friend, the well-known critic, Edmond Schérer, and the philosopher Caro. Curious was the sympathetic but somewhat condescending tone with which these two writers treated Amiel, and they regretted that he lacked the qualities necessary for a perfectly genuine work. But meantime the genuine labors of these two writers — E. Schérer's critical works and Caro's philosophical writings — have barely outlived their authors; while Amiel's unexpected non-genuine work, his diary, remains a book forever alive, necessary for men, fruitfully affecting their lives.

A writer is dear and necessary to us only in proportion as he opens to us the inner laboratory of his soul, it being taken for granted, of course, that his work is new, and not something done before. Whatever he may have written, — a drama, a text-book, a story, a philosophical treatise, a lyrical poem, a criticism, a satire, — we care only for the inner work of his soul as displayed in the production, and not for the architectural construction according to which he arranges his thoughts and feelings, while largely, and I think always, maiming them.

[1] "*Est-ce que toutes mes paperasses réunies, ma correspondance, ces milliers de pages intimes, mes cours, mes articles, mes rimes, mes notes diverses sont autre chose que des feuilles sèches? A qui et à quoi aurai-je été utile? Est-ce que mon nom durera un jour et signifier a-t-il quelque chose pour quelqu'un? — Vie nulle.* Vol. II., p. 190, 191.

Everything Amiel molded in ready form — his lectures, treatises, verses — is dead; his diary, where, without thinking of form, he spoke with himself, is full of life, vigor, instruction, consolation, and will always remain one of the best books, such as have been unwittingly left to us by men like Marcus Aurelius, Pascal, and Epictetus.

Pascal said: —

"There are only three kinds of men: first, those who, finding God, serve Him; secondly, those who, not finding Him, are occupied in the search for Him; and thirdly, those who neither find Him nor seek for Him.

"The first are reasonable and happy; the last are unreasonable and unhappy; those between are unhappy but reasonable."

I think that the distinction established by Pascal between the first and the second classes, — between those who, as he says, finding God, serve Him with all their hearts, and those who, not finding Him, seek Him with all their hearts, — is not only not so great as he imagined, but does not even exist at all. I think that those who with all their hearts and with agony, — *en gémissant*, as Pascal says, — seek God, are already serving Him. They are serving Him by the fact that by these sufferings their searchings "trace out and open the way for others to reach God," as Pascal himself did in his "Thoughts," and as Amiel did all his life in his journal.

All Amiel's life, as it is presented to us in this journal, was full of this passionate, painful search for God; and the contemplation of this search is the more instructive that it never ceases to be a search, never pauses, never passes over into a consciousness of having discovered the truth, never into preaching.

Amiel never says to himself or to others, "I know the truth now; hear me!" On the contrary, it seems to him, as is characteristic of one who honestly seeks the truth, that the more he knows the more he needs to know, and he unceasingly does all he can to discover more and more of it, and then he is constantly conscious of his ignorance. He keeps conjecturing what Christian-

ity and the condition of the Christian should be, never for a minute pausing on the thought that Christianity is the thing which he professes, and that he himself realizes in his own case the condition of a Christian.

And meantime his whole journal is full of expressions of the deepest Christian understanding and feeling. And these expressions affect the reader with especial force, owing to their very unconsciousness and sincerity. He talks to himself, not thinking of any one hearing him, not striving to seem to believe in what he does not believe, not concealing his sufferings and his searchings.

It is as if you were present without the knowledge of the master at the most mysterious and the profoundest and the most passionate inner work of the soul, ordinarily concealed from the sight of strangers.

And so you may find many far more artistic and eloquent expressions of religious feeling than Amiel's, but it would be difficult to find any more sincere or soul-affecting.

Not long before his death, knowing that his illness might at any moment end with suffocation, he wrote: —

"When one does not dream of having before one a decade, a year, a month of reprieve, when one cannot reckon on more than a dozen hours, and the next night brings the threat of the unknown, it is evident that one must renounce art, science, politics, and be content to commune with oneself, and this is possible even to the very end. This interior soliloquy is the sole resource of the man condemned to death when the execution of the sentence is delayed. He collects himself in his inmost tribunal. He no longer radiates, he psychologizes. He no longer acts, he contemplates. .... Like the hare he returns to his 'form' to die, and this 'form' is his conscience, his thought. It is also his *journal intime*. As long as he can hold his pen, and while he has a moment of solitude, he collects himself before this echo of himself, and converses with his God.

"Nevertheless there is not here a moral examination, an act of contrition, a cry of help. It is only an Amen of submission. .... 'My child, give me thy heart.'

"Renunciation and acquiescence are less difficult to me than to others, for I wish nothing. I should wish only not to suffer, but Jesus at Gethsemane believed that he might offer the same prayer: let us join as he did these words, *Nevertheless not my will but Thine be done*, and let us wait." [1]

Such he was on the eve of his death. He was not any the less frank and grave all through his journal, notwithstanding its beauty, and the refinement of his language, shown in many places and grown to be habitual with him. In the course of the whole thirty years of his journal he feels what we are all so apt to forget, that we are all condemned to death and our execution is only postponed. And this is what causes this book to be so frank, serious, and useful.

1893.

[1] Vol. II., pp. 318, 319.

INTRODUCTION TO THE PEASANT STORIES OF S. T. SEMENOF

I HAVE long since made it a rule to judge every art production from three sides: first, from the side of the subject, how far important or necessary to men is that which is opened up newly by the artist, for every production is only so far a production of art as it discovers a new side of life; secondly, how far good and beautiful, corresponding to the subject, is the form of the production; and thirdly, how far is the artist's relation to his object genuine, in other words, how far does he believe in what he has produced.

This last always seems to me the most important to an art production. It gives the art production its strength, it makes the art production contagious — that is to say, it communicates to the spectator, the hearer, or the reader the feelings experienced by the artist.

In this respect Semenof is gifted to the highest degree.

There is a story by Flaubert, translated by Turgenief — "Julian." The last episode of the story, which ought to be the most touching, represents Julian lying on a bed together with a leper, and warming him with his body. This leper is Christ, who carries Julian with Him to heaven. The whole thing is described with great skill, but in reading this story I am always left perfectly cold and indifferent. I feel that the author would not have done and would not have cared to do what his hero did, and, therefore, I have no desire to do it, and I experience no emotion on reading of this marvelous exploit.

But here Semenof writes the simplest story, and it always affects me. A country lad comes to Moscow to find a place, and under the protection of a coachman from his own village, in service with a rich merchant,

obtains the situation as dvornik's assistant. This situation had been formerly held by an old man. The merchant, by the coachman's advice, dismisses the old man and takes the young lad in his place. The lad comes at night to begin his work, and from the courtyard hears the old man in the dvornik's room bewailing the fact that for no fault of his he had been dismissed, but only to give up his place to a younger man. The lad suddenly feels compassion for the old man, and his conscience pricks him for having caused him to lose his situation. He considers, hesitates, and, at last, decides to give up the work, agreeable and important as it was to him.

All this is told in such a way that every time I read this story I feel that the author not only would have wished to behave that way in such circumstances, but would have done so, and his feeling communicates itself to me, and I feel happy, and it seems to me that I myself have done some good deed or was ready to.

Sincerity is Semenof's merit. But, moreover, his subject-matter is always important. Important because it concerns itself with the most important class in Russia, — the peasantry, which Semenof knows, as only a peasant can know it, having himself lived their agricultural life in the country.

Still more important is the subject-matter of his stories, because in all of them the interest is not confined to external events or to eccentricities of existence, but to the way men approach or fall away from the ideal of Christian truth which is held firmly and distinctly in the author's soul, and serves him as a true criterion and measure of the worth and significance of men's actions.

The form of the stories perfectly corresponds to their subject-matter: it is dignified and simple, and the details are always true; there is not a false note. Especially beautiful, often quite original in its methods of expression, but always artless and strikingly strong and picturesque is the language in which the characters of the stories talk.

April 4, 1894.

INTRODUCTION TO A. STOCKHAM'S TOKOLOGY

THE book here presented does not belong among the vast throng of books of every kind, from those treating of philosophy and science to those treating of art and practical life, books which in differing words, in differing combinations and modifications, utter and reiterate the same familiar old commonplaces.

This book is one of those rare ones which treat, not of what every one is talking about and is necessary to no one, but of something which no one talks about, and is important and necessary to every one.

It is important for parents to know how to behave themselves so as, without excessive suffering, to bring into the world pure and healthy children and it is still more important for the prospective children themselves to be born under the best conditions, — as it says in one of the epigraphs of this book: *To be well born is the right of every child.*

This book is not one of those that are read merely so that no one may say, "I have not read it," but it is one of those the reading of which leaves something behind, compelling people to change their lives, to correct what was incorrect in them, or at least to think about it.

This book is entitled "Tokology," the science of the birth of children. There are all kinds of very strange sciences, but no such science as this; and yet, next to the science of how to live and how to die, this is the most important of sciences.

This book has had a great success in America, and has had a wide and important influence on American mothers and fathers. In Russia it ought to exert a still

greater influence, the question of refraining from tobacco and all kinds of stimulating beverages, beginning with alcohol and ending with tea, the questions of nutrition without taking the lives of animals, vegetarianism, the questions of sexual restraint in family life, and many others, some of them already settled, others still under discussion, and evoking an enormous literature in Europe and America, have with us scarcely, as yet, been touched upon; and therefore Dr. Stockham's book is especially important for us: it immediately transports the reader into a new world of vital human impulse.

In this book every thoughtful woman — it is especially designed for women — will find first and foremost that there is not the slightest necessity for her to continue living so blindly as old women and young girls have been living, but that she may and must find better ways of living, using for this purpose science, the experience of people, and her own free thought; and as a first example of such a method of treatment she will find in this book many precious counsels, and hints which will make life easier for herself, for her husband, and for her children.

February 14, 1890.

MODERN SCIENCE

INTRODUCTION TO A RUSSIAN TRANSLATION OF EDWARD CARPENTER'S ESSAY, "MODERN SCIENCE"

I THINK that Carpenter's essay on Modern Science[1] may be especially useful to our Russian society, where, more than in any other in Europe, is spread the superstitious belief that, for the good of humanity, it is not at all necessary to propagate true religious and moral knowledge, but only to study the experimental sciences, and that a knowledge of these sciences will satisfy all the spiritual demands of humanity.

It is obvious what a pernicious influence (similar to that of religious superstitions) such a crude superstition must have on the moral life of men, and therefore the dissemination of the thoughts of writers who critically examine the results and methods of the experimental sciences is especially desirable in our society.

Carpenter proves that neither astronomy, nor physics, nor chemistry, nor biology, nor sociology gives us a true knowledge of actual facts, but that all the "laws" discovered by these sciences are only generalizations, which have but an approximate value as laws, and that only owing to ignorance or disregard of other factors. Further, that even these laws appear to be laws to us only because we discover them in a domain so distant from us in time and space that we cannot perceive their want of correspondence with actual fact.

Besides this, Carpenter also points out that the method of science, consisting in the explanation of phenomena

[1] "Modern Science: A Criticism. Civilization, its Cause and Cure, and other Essays." By Edward Carpenter.

near and important to us by phenomena more distant from and indifferent to us, is a false method which can never lead to the desired results.

"Each science," he says, "has been (as far as possible) reduced to its lowest terms. Ethics has been made a question of utility and inherited experience. Political economy has been exhausted of all conceptions of justice between man and man, of charity, affection, and the instinct of solidarity; and has been founded on its lowest discoverable factor, namely, self-interest. Biology has been denuded of the force of personality in plants, animals, and men; the "self" here has been set aside, and the attempt made to reduce the science to a question of chemical and cellular affinities, protoplasm, and the laws of osmose. Chemical affinities, again, and all the wonderful phenomena of physics are emptied down into a flight of atoms; and the flight of atoms (and of astronomic orbs as well) is reduced to the laws of dynamics...."

It is supposed that to reduce higher questions to terms of lower ones will explain the higher. But this explanation is never attained, and what happened is that, descending lower and lower in its investigations, from the most essential questions to those less essential, science at last reaches a domain quite foreign to man, and only adjacent to him, to which domain it confines its attention, leaving without any solution all questions most important for man.

What occurs is something similar to what the result would be if a man, desiring to understand the nature of an object before him, should, instead of approaching it, examining it on all sides, and handling it, remove farther and farther from it, finally removing to such a distance that all details of color and unevenness of surface should disappear, and there remained only the outline which detached it from the horizon. And from such a distance the man might begin to describe this object in detail, imagining that he has now a clear understanding of it, and that this idea, conceived at such a distance, would contribute to a complete understanding of the

object. This self-delusion is partly exposed by Carpenter's criticism, which, in the first place points out that the knowledge science gives us in the sphere of natural science consists only of convenient modes of generalization, which by no means express actual facts; and secondly, that the method of science by which the phenomena of a higher order are reduced to the phenomena of a lower order, will never enable us to arrive at an explanation of the phenomena of the higher order.

But without settling beforehand the question whether the method of the experimental sciences can or cannot achieve a solution of the problems of life most important for humanity, the activity itself of the experimental sciences, considered in relation to the eternal and most legitimate demands of humanity, impresses one by its fallacy.

Men must live. And in order to live they must know how to live. All men always — well or ill — have learnt this, and in accordance with their knowledge, have lived and progressed. And this knowledge of how men should live has always, since the times of Moses, Solon, Confucius, been considered a science — the very science of sciences; and it is only in our time that it has begun to be considered that the science of how to live is not a science at all, but that true science is only experimental science, beginning with mathematics and ending with sociology.

And a strange misunderstanding ensues.

A simple and sensible working-man — according to the old sense and common sense as well — supposes that if there are men studying all their lives, and who think for him in return for being fed and provided for by him, then these men are probably engaged in studying what is needful for man, and he expects from science that it will solve for him those questions on which depend his welfare and that of all men. He expects that science will teach him how to live; how to act toward the members of his own family, his neighbors, and those of other countries; how to struggle with his passions;

in what he should and should not believe, and much besides. And what does our science reply?

It triumphantly announces how many millions of miles the sun is from the earth, with what rapidity light traverses space, how many millions of undulations of the ether a second are produced by light, and how many undulations of atmosphere by sound; it tells of the chemical composition of the Milky Way; it tells of a new element, helion, of micro-organisms and their excrements, of the points in the hand where electricity concentrates, of X-rays, and so on.

"But all this is not at all what I am in need of knowing," says the simple, sensible man. "I want to know how to live."

"I don't care what you are in need of knowing," replies science, "what you ask for refers to sociology. But before answering questions of sociology we must settle questions of zoölogy, botany, physiology — in short, biology. And in order to settle these questions it is first necessary to solve questions of physics, of chemistry; it is necessary also to agree as to the form of the infinitesimal atoms, and as to how it is that the ether with neither weight nor resistance transmits force."

And men, chiefly those who sit on the backs of others, and who can therefore conveniently wait, are satisfied by such answers, and continue sitting and yawning, awaiting what was promised. But the simple and sensible working-man, he on whose back the men studying science are sitting, the great mass of people, humanity at large, cannot be satisfied with such replies, and naturally ask in wonder, "But when will that be? We cannot wait. You yourselves say that you will find out all this after several generations. But we live, we are alive to-day and to-morrow we shall die, and therefore we must know how we are to live the life we are in now. Teach us, then."

"The stupid and ignorant man!" answers science; "he does not understand that what science serves is not utility but science. Science investigates that which is

subject to investigation, and cannot choose the objects of its study. Science studies everything. Such is the nature of science."

Men of science are indeed convinced that the characteristic of attending to trifles and neglecting things more substantial and important is not their own characteristic, but that of science. But the simple, sensible man begins to suspect that this characteristic belongs, not to science, but to those who are inclined to occupy themselves with trifles, attaching to these trifles great importance.

"Science studies everything," say the men of science. But there is too much of everything. Everything means an infinite quantity of objects, and it is impossible to study all at once. As a lantern cannot light up everything but only the place it is directed toward, so also science cannot investigate everything, but inevitably investigates only that to which its attention is directed. And as the lantern throws the strongest light on the place nearest to it, weaker and weaker light on more remote objects, and does not light up at all those objects which its light cannot reach; so also human science, of whatever kind, has always investigated and is investigating in most detail that which appears to the investigators to be most important, studying in less detail what appears to them less important, and not at all concerning itself with all the remaining infinite quantity of objects.

The standard which has defined and defines for men the very important, the less important, and the unimportant is men's general understanding of the sense and object of life, *i.e.* religion.

But our modern men of science, not acknowledging any religion, — and therefore possessing no basis upon which they might select objects for study according to the degree of their importance, separating the most important from the less important, and from that vast number of objects which will always remain uninvestigated because of the limitations of the human mind and their infinite quantity, — have invented for themselves a

theory of "science for science's sake," according to which science studies, not what is necessary to men, but everything.

Indeed, experimental science does study everything, only not in the sense of the totality of objects, but in the sense of disorder and chaos in the distribution of the investigated subjects, *i.e.* science does not most investigate what is most needed by men, less what is less needed, and not at all what is not needed, but investigates, haphazard, anything it comes across. Although there do exist classifications of the sciences by Comte and others, these classifications do not direct the choice of subjects for investigation, this being directed by human weaknesses inherent in men of science as in all men.

So that in reality experimental scientists do not, as they imagine and assert, study everything, but that which is more advantageous and easier for them to study. It is more advantageous to study what may contribute to the welfare of those higher classes to which the men occupied with science themselves belong, and it is easier to study things devoid of life. And this is what the investigators of experimental science do: they study books, monuments, and dead bodies, and this study they regard as the most real science.

So that what in our time is regarded as the true and only "science" (in the sense that the "Bible" was once called the only book worthy of the name) is not the investigation of how to make the life of men better and happier, but consists in collecting and copying out of many books into one what was written concerning a certain subject by former men, or in pouring liquids from one vial into another, in skilfully dissecting microscopic preparations, in cultivating bacteria, in cutting up frogs and dogs, in investigating the X-rays, the chemical composition of the stars, and so forth.

And all those sciences the object of which is to make human life better and happier — religious, moral, and social sciences — are not regarded as sciences by the reigning science, and are relegated to the theologians, philosophers, jurists, historians, and political economists, who

are occupied, under the pretense of scientific investigation, only in proving that the existing order of life, which puts them in an advantageous position, is precisely the one which should exist, and should, therefore, not only not be reformed, but be maintained by all means.

Not to speak of theology, philosophy, and jurisprudence, very noticeable in this respect is the most fashionable of this kind of science — political economy. The political economy most widely spread (that of Marx), acknowledging the existing order of life to be normal, not only does not now require of men the reformation of this order, *i.e.* does not point out how men should live in order that their condition might be improved, but, on the contrary, demands the continuation of the cruelty of the present state of things in order that the more than doubtful prophecies of what will happen if men continue to live as badly as they do at present, should be realized.

And, as always happens, the lower a human activity descends, the farther it recedes from what it should be, the more its self-assertion increases. This has happened with the science of our time. True science has never been appreciated by its contemporaries, but, on the contrary, has for the most part been persecuted. And it could not be otherwise. True science indicates to men their errors, and points to new, unusual ways of life, both of which services are obnoxious to the ruling part of society. Whereas the present science not only refrains from counteracting the tastes and demands of the ruling part of society, but completely coincides with them; it satisfies idle curiosity, astonishes people, and promises them increase of pleasure. And so, whereas all that is truly great is quiet, modest, imperceptible, the science of our time knows no limits to its self-glorification.

"All former methods were erroneous, and thus all that was formerly regarded as science is fraudulent, fallacious, frivolous. Our method is the only true one, ours the only true science. The progress of our science is such that thousands of years have not attained what

we have achieved in the last century. In the future, by following in the same path, our science will solve all questions, and give happiness to all humanity. Our science is the most important activity in the world, and we men of science the most important and necessary men on earth."

So think and say the men of science of our time, and yet, seen in its full significance, no science in any age or nation has stood on so low a plane as the present one. One part of it, that which should study the means of making human life good and happy, is occupied in justifying the existing bad order of life, and the other is absorbed with the solution of questions of idle curiosity.

"How idle curiosity?" I hear exclaimed by voices indignant at such blasphemy. "How about steam, electricity, telephones, and all our technical improvements? Not to speak of their scientific importance, observe the practical results they have achieved. Man has conquered nature, subjected its forces to himself".... and so on.

"But," replies the simple and sensible man, "all the practical results of man's victory over nature from long ago up to the present, are applied to manufactures injurious to the people; to means for exterminating men, to increasing luxury, dissoluteness; and therefore, man's victory over nature has not increased the welfare of men, but, on the contrary, made their condition worse."

If the organization of a society is bad, as ours is, where a small number of men dominate the majority and oppress them, then every victory over nature will inevitably only serve to increase this power and this oppression. And so it happens.

With a science taking as its subject, not the investigation of how people should live, but of what exists, and therefore occupied chiefly in investigating inanimate objects, and meanwhile leaving the organization of human society as it is, — with such science no improvements, no victories over nature, can improve the condition of men.

"And medical science? You forget its beneficial achievements. And inoculation with bacteria! And modern surgical operations!" generally exclaim the defenders of science, who, as their last resort, bring forward the successes of medicine in proof of the fruitfulness of all science.

"We can by inoculation prevent disease and cure it, we can perform painless operations, we can cut open and treat the vital organs of the body, we can straighten deformity," generally say the advocates of science, thinking somehow, that a child cured of diphtheria (one out of thousands of children who, in Russia, independently of diphtheria, average a death rate of 50 per cent and in foundling asylums 80 per cent) must convince people of the usefulness of science in general.

The order of our life is such that not only children, but the majority of adults, through bad food, heavy, injurious work, bad dwellings, bad clothes, and many hardships, do not live half so long as they should; it is such that children's diseases, syphilis, consumption, and alcoholism are getting a firmer and firmer hold of men, that a great part of the results of men's labor is taken from them for preparations for war, and that every ten or twenty years millions of men are exterminated by war. And all this occurs because science, instead of spreading amongst men correct religious, moral, and social ideas which would cause all these calamities to disappear of themselves, is occupied on the one hand with the justification of the existing order, and on the other hand with playthings. And in proof of the fruitfulness of science we are reminded that it cures one out of a thousand of those invalids who in reality become ill precisely because science does not fulfil its natural function.

If even a small portion of its efforts, of that attention and toil which science devotes to the trifles it is occupied with, had been directed toward the development amongst men of correct religious, moral, social, and even hygienic notions, there would not have occurred a hundredth part of those diphtherias, women's diseases,

and deformities upon the curing of which science so prides itself, effecting these cures in hospitals, the luxurious appointments of which cannot be accessible to all.

It is just as if men who had badly ploughed a field and badly sown it with bad seed should walk on this field and treat some broken ears of corn, meanwhile trampling on the rest; and should then exhibit this art of treating the broken ears as a proof of their knowledge of agriculture.

Our science, in order to become a science and to be really useful instead of harmful to humanity, must first of all renounce its experimental method, which causes it to consider as its business merely the study of what exists, and return to the only wise and fruitful understanding of science, according to which its subject is the investigation of how men must live. In this is the object and meaning of science, whereas, the investigation of what exists can be the subject of science only to the extent to which this investigation contributes to the knowledge of how men should live.

It is precisely this acknowledgment of the incompetency of experimental science and of the necessity of adopting another method that is expressed in Carpenter's essay.

1898.

THE FIRST STEP[1]

I

WHEN a man is working, not for show, but with the desire of accomplishing what he has undertaken, he inevitably shapes his actions into a certain order of succession, this order being determined by the nature of the work. If a man postpones to a later time that which, from the nature of the work, should be done first, or altogether omits some essential part, — he is certainly not working seriously, but is only making a pretense. This rule holds unalterably true, whether the work be material or not. As one cannot have any serious intention of baking bread, unless one first kneads the flour and then heats the oven, sweeps out the ashes, and so on, exactly in the same way one cannot seriously desire to lead a righteous life, without adopting a certain order of succession in the attainment of the necessary qualities.

This rule is especially important in connection with righteousness of life; for whereas in the case of material work, such for instance as making bread, it is easy to discover, by the result of his actions, whether a man is seriously engaged in work, or only pretending, in the case of leading a righteous life this verification is impossible. If people, without kneading the dough, or heating the oven, only pretend to make bread, — as on the stage, — then from the result, the absence of bread, it becomes evident that they were only pretending; but when a man pretends to be leading a righteous life, we have no such

[1] Written as a preface to a Russian translation of "The Ethics of Diet," by Howard Williams.

direct indications that he is not striving seriously, but is only making a pretense; for, not only are the results of a right life not always evident to those around, but very often they even appear to be pernicious. Respect for a man's activity and the acknowledgment of its utility and pleasantness for those around furnish no proof that his life is really good.

Therefore, for the distinguishing of a really good life from the mere appearance of one, this indication is especially valuable, namely, a regular order of succession in the acquirement of the qualities essential to a righteous life. And this indication is valuable, not so much for the discovery of the seriousness of other men's strivings after goodness, but for the testing of this sincerity in ourselves, as in this respect we are liable to deceive ourselves even more than others.

A correct order of succession in the attainment of virtues is an inevitable condition of advance toward a righteous life, consequently the teachers of mankind have always prescribed a certain invariable order for their attainment.

All moral teachings set up a ladder, as Chinese wisdom puts it, reaching from earth to heaven, the ascent of which can only be accomplished by starting from the lowest step. As in the teaching of the Brahmans, Buddhists, Confucians, so also in the teaching of the Greek sages, steps were fixed, and a higher step could not be attained without the lower one having been previously taken. All the moral teachers of mankind, religious and non-religious alike, have admitted the necessity of a definite order of succession in the attainment of the qualities essential to a righteous life. The necessity for this lies in the very essence of things, and therefore, it would seem, ought to be recognized by all.

But, strange to say, from the time Christianity spread widely, the consciousness of this necessary order appears to have been more and more lost, and is now retained only in the region of asceticism and monasticism. Secular Christians suppose and admit the possibility of the acquirement of the superior qualities of a righteous life,

not only in the absence of the lower virtues, which are a necessary condition of the higher ones, but even in the presence of the widest development of vices; in consequence of which there prevails in our time, among the majority of the men of the world, the greatest confusion as to what a right life is. The very conception of what constitutes a righteous life has been lost.

II

This, it seems to me, has come about in the following way.

When Christianity replaced heathenism it put forth moral demands superior to the heathen ones, and at the same time — as was also the case with pagan morality — it necessarily laid down one indispensable order for the attainment of virtues — certain steps in the attainment of a righteous life.

Plato's virtues, beginning with temperance,[1] advanced through manliness and wisdom to justice; the Christian virtues, commencing with self-renunciation, rise through devotion to the will of God to love.

Those who accepted Christianity seriously and strove to live righteous Christian lives, thus understood Christianity, and always began living rightly by a renunciation of their desires, which renunciation included the temperance of the pagans.

But let it not be supposed that Christianity in this matter was only echoing the teachings of paganism; let me not be accused of degrading Christianity from its lofty position to the level of heathenism. Such an accusation would be unjust, for I regard the Christian teaching as the highest the world has known, and as quite different from heathenism. The Christian teaching replaced the pagan one simply because it was different from and superior to it. But both Christian and pagan alike

[1] It is hardly necessary to point out that in this article temperance is used in its real meaning, and not with any exclusive reference to the drink question. — Tr.

lead men toward truth and goodness; and, as truth and goodness are always the same, the way to them must also be the same, and the *first steps* on this way must inevitably be the same for the Christian as for the heathen.

The difference between the Christian and pagan teaching of goodness lies in this: that the heathen teaching is one of final perfection, while the Christian teaching is one of infinite perfecting. Plato, for instance, makes justice the model of perfection, whereas Christ's model is the infinite perfecting of love. "*Be ye perfect, even as your Father in Heaven is perfect.*"

In this lies the difference. And hence the different relations of the pagan and Christian teachings toward different grades of virtue. According to the former the attainment of the highest virtue was possible, and each step toward this attainment had its comparative merit; the higher the step the greater the merit; so that from the pagan point of view men may be divided into moral and immoral — into more or less virtuous; whereas, according to the Christian teaching, which sets up the ideal of infinite perfection, this division is impossible. There can be neither higher nor lower grades — all steps are equal in relation to the infinite ideal.

Among the heathen the stage of virtue attained by a man constituted his merit; in Christianity merit consists only in the process of attainment, in the greater or lesser speed of attainment. From the heathen point of view a man who possessed the virtue of reasonableness stood morally higher than one deficient in that virtue; a man who in addition to reasonableness possessed manliness stood higher still; a man who to reasonableness and manliness added justice stood still higher. Whereas one Christian cannot be regarded as morally either higher or lower than another. A man is more or less of a Christian only in proportion to the speed with which he advances toward infinite perfection, irrespective of the stage he may have reached at a given moment. Hence the stationary righteousness of the Pharisee is lower than the advance of the repentant thief on the cross.

Such is the difference between the Christian and the heathen teachings. Consequently the stages of virtue, as for instance temperance and manliness, which in heathenism constitute merit, constitute none whatever in Christianity. In this respect the teachings differ. But with regard to the fact that there can be no advance toward virtue — toward perfection, independently of the lowest steps in virtue, as well in paganism as in Christianity — here there can be no difference.

The Christian (no less than the heathen) must commence the work of perfecting himself from the beginning, *i.e.* with the step at which the heathen begins it, namely temperance, just as a man who wishes to ascend a flight of stairs cannot avoid beginning with the first step. The only difference is that, for the pagan, temperance itself constitutes a virtue; whereas for the Christian, it is only a part of that self-abnegation which is itself but an indispensable condition of all aspiration after perfection. Therefore the manifestation of true Christianity could not but follow the same path as had been indicated and followed by heathenism.

But not all men have understood Christianity as an aspiration toward the perfection of the Heavenly Father. The majority of people have regarded it as a teaching about salvation, *i.e.* deliverance from sin, by means of grace transmitted among Roman Catholics and Greek Orthodox through the Church, according to Protestants, the Reformed Church, and Calvinists, by means of faith in the redemption, and according to some by means of the two combined.

And precisely this teaching has destroyed the sincerity and seriousness of men's relation to the moral teaching of Christianity. However much the representatives of these faiths may preach about these means of salvation in hindering man in his aspiration after a righteous life, but, on the contrary, contributing toward it, — still out of certain propositions, there necessarily ensue certain conclusions; and no arguments can prevent men from arriving at these conclusions, when once they have accepted the statements from

which they result. If a man believe that he can be saved through grace given to him by the Church, or through the redemption, it is natural that he should think that his efforts to live a righteous life are unnecessary — the more so when he is told that even the hope that his efforts will make him better is a sin. Consequently a man who believes that there are means of salvation other than personal effort[1] cannot strive with the same energy and seriousness as the man who knows no other means. And not striving with perfect seriousness and knowing of other means besides personal effort, a man will inevitably neglect that unalterable order of succession for the attainment of the virtues necessary to a righteous life. And this has happened with the majority of those who profess Christianity.

III

The doctrine that personal effort is not necessary for the attainment by man of spiritual perfection, but that there are other means for its acquirement, is the cause of the relaxation of effort after a righteous life, and of the neglect of the consecutiveness indispensable to such a life.

The great mass of mankind, accepting Christianity only externally, took advantage of the substitution of Christianity for paganism to free themselves from the demands of the heathen virtues,— no longer necessary for a Christian, — and to free themselves from all conflict with their animal nature.

The same thing happens with those that cease to believe in the teaching of the Church. They are like the before-mentioned believers, only they put forward — instead of grace bestowed by the Church or through redemption — some imaginary good work, approved of by the majority of men, such as the service of science,

[1] As for instance by "indulgences" among the Roman Catholics. — AUTHOR'S NOTE.

art, or humanity; — in the name of this imaginary good work they liberate themselves from the consecutive attainment of the qualities necessary for a right life, and are satisfied with pretending, like men on the stage, to be living a righteous life.

Those people that fell away from heathenism, without embracing Christianity in its true significance, began to preach love for God and man apart from self-renunciation and justice, and without temperance, *i.e.* to preach the higher virtues without the attainment of the lower ones, *i.e.* not the virtues themselves, but their semblance.

Some preach love to God and man without self-renunciation, and others humaneness, the service of humanity without temperance. And, as this teaching, while pretending to introduce him into higher moral regions, encourages the animal nature of man by liberating him from the most elementary demands of morality long ago laid down by the heathens, and not only not rejected, but strengthened, by true Christianity, it was readily accepted both by believers and unbelievers.

Only the other day the Pope's encyclical about socialism was published, in which, after a supposed refutation of the socialists' views as to the wrongfulness of private property, it was plainly stated that "certainly no one is obliged to help his neighbors by giving what he or his family needs, nor even to diminish anything of that which is required by him for decency. No one, indeed, need live contrary to custom."[1] "But after needful attention has been given to necessity and decency," continues the encyclical, "the duty of every one is to give the surplus to the poor."

Thus preaches the head of the most widely accepted Church of our time. Thus have preached all the Church teachers regarding salvation by works as insufficient. And, together with this teaching of selfishness, which prescribes that you shall give to your neighbors only that which you do not want yourself, they preach love and recall with pathos the celebrated words of Paul in the

[1] This passage is from St. Thomas: Nullus enim inconvenienter debet vivere.

thirteenth chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians, about love.

Notwithstanding that the Gospels overflow with demands for self-renunciation, with indications that self-renunciation is the first condition of Christian perfection, notwithstanding such clear expressions as: "Whosoever will not take up his cross,...." "Whosoever hath not forsaken father, mother,...." "Whosoever shall lose his life...." people assure themselves, and others, that it is possible to love men without renouncing, not only that to which one is accustomed, but also what one regards as decent for oneself.

So say the Church people, and those who reject not only the Church but also the Christian teaching — free-thinkers — think, speak, write, and act in an exactly similar manner. These men assure themselves, and others, that, without in the least diminishing their needs, without overcoming their desires, they can serve mankind, *i.e.* lead a righteous life.

Men have thrown aside the heathen consecutiveness of virtues, and without accepting the Christian teaching in its true significance, and, not having accepted the Christian order of succession, they remain without any guidance.

IV

In olden times, when there was no Christian teaching, all the teachers of life, beginning with Socrates, regarded as the first virtue of life, temperance — *ἐγκράτεια* or *σωφροσύνη*; and it was understood that every virtue must begin with and pass through this one. It was clear that a man who had no self-command, who had developed an immense number of desires, and had yielded himself up to them, could not lead a righteous life. It was evident that, before a man could even think of disinterestedness, justice, — to say nothing of generosity or love — he must learn to exercise control over himself. Now, according to our ideas, nothing of this

sort is necessary. We are convinced that a man whose desires are developed to the highest degree attained in our society, a man who cannot live without satisfying a hundred unnecessary habits which have taken possession of him, can lead an altogether moral and righteous life. Looked at from any point of view, — the lowest, utilitarian, the higher, pagan, which demands justice, or especially from the highest, the Christian, which demands love, — it should surely be clear to every one that a man who uses for his own pleasure (with which he might easily dispense) the labor, often the painful labor, of others behaves badly, and that this is the very first wrong action he must cease to commit, if he wishes to live a good life.

From the utilitarian point of view such conduct is bad because, while forcing others to work for him, a man is always in an unstable position; he accustoms himself to the satisfaction of his desires and becomes their slave, while those who work for him do so with hatred and envy, and only await an opportunity to free themselves from the necessity of so working. Consequently such a man is always in danger of being left with deeply rooted habits, which he is unable to satisfy.

From the point of view of justice, such conduct is bad, because it is not well to employ for one's own pleasure the labor of other men, who cannot themselves afford a hundredth part of the pleasures enjoyed by him for whom they labor.

From the point of view of Christian love, it can hardly be necessary to prove that a man who loves others will give them his own labor rather than take from them for his own pleasure the fruit of their labor.

But these demands of utility, justice, and love are altogether ignored by the society of our day. With us the tendency to limit one's desires is regarded as neither the first, nor even the last, but as an altogether unnecessary, condition of a righteous life.

According to the prevailing and most widely spread teaching of life to-day, the augmentation of one's wants

is, on the contrary, regarded as a desirable condition, as a sign of development, civilization, culture, and perfection. So-called educated people regard habits of comfort, *i.e.* of effeminacy, as not only harmless, but even good, indicating a certain moral elevation, — almost a virtue.

It is thought that the more the wants, and the more refined these wants, the better.

Nothing corroborates this statement better than the descriptive poetry, and especially the novels of the last two centuries.

How are the heroes and heroines who represent the ideals of virtue portrayed?

In most cases the men who are meant to represent something noble and lofty — from Childe Harold down to the latest heroes of Feuillet, Trollope, De Maupassant — are nothing else than depraved sluggards, consuming in luxury the labor of thousands, and themselves doing nothing useful for anybody. The heroines, their mistresses, who in one way or another afford more or less delight to these men, are equally idle, also devouring by their luxury the labor of others.

I do not refer to those representations of really abstinent and industrious people with which one occasionally meets in literature; I am speaking of the usual type, representing an ideal to the masses of the person whom the majority of men and women are trying to resemble. I remember the difficulty (inexplicable to me at the time) that I experienced when I wrote novels, and with which I contended, and with which I know all now contend who have even the dimmest conception of what constitutes real moral beauty, — the difficulty of portraying a type taken from the upper classes, ideally good and kind, and at the same time true to life.

A description of a man or woman of the upper classes would be true to life only if it represented him in his usual surroundings, *i.e.* in luxury, physical idleness, and demanding much. From a moral point of view such a person is undoubtedly objectionable. But it is necessary to represent this person in such a way that he may ap-

pear attractive. And novelists try so to represent him. I also tried. And, strange to say! such a representation, *i.e.* of a fornicator, a murderer (duellist or soldier), an utterly useless, idly moving about, fashionable buffoon, who appears attractive, does not require much art or effort. The readers of novels are, for the most part, exactly such men, and therefore readily believe that these Childe Harolds, Onyegins,[1] Messieurs de Camors, and the like, are very excellent people.

V

The fact that the men of our time do not admit heathen abstinence and Christian self-renunciation to be good and desirable qualities, but, on the contrary, regard the augmentation of wants as good and elevated, is clearly proved by the education given to the vast majority of children in our society. Instead of accustoming them to temperance, like heathens, or to the self-renunciation proper to Christians, they are deliberately inoculated with habits of effeminacy, physical idleness, and luxury.

I have long wished to write a fairy tale of this kind: A woman, wishing to avenge herself on one who has insulted her, carries off her enemy's child, and, going to a sorcerer, asks him to teach her how she can most cruelly avenge herself on the stolen infant. The sorcerer bids her carry the child to a place which he indicates, and assures her that a most terrible vengeance will be the result. The incensed woman follows his advice, but, keeping her eye upon the child, is astonished to find that it is found and adopted by a wealthy, childless man. She goes to the sorcerer and reproaches him, but he bids her wait. The child grows up in luxury and effeminacy. The woman is perplexed, but again the sorcerer bids her wait. And at length the time comes when the wicked woman is not only satisfied, but even feels compassion for her victim, He grows up in the

[1] The hero of a Russian poem by Pushkin. — Tr.

effeminacy and dissoluteness of wealth, and, thanks to his good nature, is ruined.

Then begins a series of physical sufferings, poverty and humiliation to which he is especially sensitive, and with which he knows not how to contend. He has aspirations toward a moral life, — but his flesh is weak; he has grown effeminate by being accustomed to luxury and idleness; he struggles in vain; he falls lower and ever lower; he indulges in drunkenness to drown thought, then comes crime or insanity or suicide.

And indeed one cannot regard without horror the education of the children of the wealthy class in our day. Only the cruelest foe would, one would think, inoculate a child with those defects and vices which are now instilled into him by his parents, especially by mothers. One is horror-struck at the sight, and still more at the results of this, if only one knows how to discern what is taking place in the souls of the best of these children, so carefully ruined by their parents.

Young creatures are inoculated with habits of effeminacy at a time when they do not yet understand their moral significance.

Not only is the habit of temperance and self-control neglected, but, contrary to the educational practice of Sparta and the ancient world in general, this quality is altogether atrophied. Not only do men grow up unaccustomed to work, and devoid of the qualities essential to all labor, — concentration of mind, strenuousness, firmness, enthusiasm for the work, ability to repair what is spoiled, familiarity with fatigue, joy in attainment, — but they are habituated to idleness, and to contempt for all the products of labor, are taught to spoil, throw away, and again procure for money anything they fancy, without a thought as to how things are made. Men are bereft of the power of acquiring the virtue, — first in order of consecutiveness, and indispensable for the attainment of all the others, — reasonableness, and are let loose in a world where the lofty virtues of justice, the service of man, and love are preached, and apparently esteemed.

It is well if the youth be endowed with a morally feeble and obtuse nature, which does not detect the difference between make-believe and genuine righteousness of life, and is satisfied with the prevailing mutual deception. If this be the case, all goes apparently well, and such a man will sometimes quietly live on, with his moral consciousness unawakened, till death.

But it is not always thus, especially of late, now that the consciousness of the immorality of such a life fills the air, and penetrates the heart unsought. Frequently, and ever more frequently, it happens that there awakens a demand for real, unfeigned morality; and then begin the inner painful struggle and sufferings, which end but rarely in the triumph of the moral sentiment.

A man feels that his life is bad, that he must reform it from the very beginning, and he tries to do so; but here he is attacked on all sides by those that have passed through a similar struggle and been vanquished. They endeavor by every means to convince him that this reform is quite unnecessary, that goodness does not at all depend upon temperance and self-renunciation, that it is possible for a man, while addicting himself to gluttony, personal adornment, physical idleness, fornication even, to be perfectly good and useful. And the struggle, in most cases, terminates lamentably. The man, either overcome by his weakness, yields to the general opinion, stifles the voice of conscience, distorts his reason to justify himself, and continues to lead the same dissipated life, assuring himself that it is redeemed by faith in the redemption or the sacraments, or by the service of science, the state, or of art; or else he struggles, suffers, and finally becomes insane, or shoots himself.

It seldom happens that, amid all the temptations that surround him, a man of our society understands what has been for thousands of years, and still is, an elementary truth for all reasonable people, namely, that for the attainment of a good life it is necessary, in the first place, to cease to live an evil life; and for the attainment of the higher virtues it is needful, first of all, to acquire the virtue of temperance or self-control, as the heathens

called it, or of self-renunciation, as Christianity has it, and gradually, by strenuous efforts, succeeds in attaining this primary virtue.

VI

I HAVE just been reading some letters, written between 1840 and 1850 by a highly educated, advanced man, the exile Ogaref, to another still more highly educated and clever man, Herzen. In these letters Ogaref gives expression to his sincere thoughts and highest aspirations, and one cannot fail to see that — as was natural to a young man — he somewhat shows off before his friend. He talks of self-perfecting, of sacred friendship, love, the service of science, of humanity, and the like. And at the same time he calmly writes that he often irritates the companion of his life by, as he expresses it, "returning home in an unsober state, or disappearing for long hours with a fallen, but dear creature. ...."

Evidently it never even occurred to this remarkably kind-hearted, talented, and educated man that there was anything in the least objectionable in the fact that he, a married man, awaiting the confinement of his wife (in his next letter he writes that his wife has given birth to a child), returned home intoxicated, and disappears with dissolute women. It did not enter his head that until he had commenced the struggle, and had, at least to some extent, conquered his inclination to drunkenness and fornication, he could not think of friendship and love, and still less of serving any one or anything. But he not only did not struggle against these vices, he evidently thought there was something very nice in them, and that they did not in the least hinder aspiration after perfection; and, therefore, instead of hiding them from the friend in whose eyes he wishes to appear in a good light, he exhibits them.

Thus it was half a century ago. I was contemporary with such men. I knew Ogaref and Herzen themselves, and others of that stamp, and men educated in

the same traditions. There was a remarkable absence of consistency in the lives of all these men. Together with a sincere and ardent desire for good, there was an utter looseness of personal desire, which, they thought, could not hinder the living of a good life, nor the performance of good, and even great, deeds. They put unkneaded loaves into a cold oven, and believed that bread would be baked. And then, when, with advancing years, they began to remark that the bread did not bake, *i.e.* that no good came of their lives, they saw in this something peculiarly tragic.

And the tragedy of such lives is indeed terrible. And this same tragedy that appeared in the lives of Herzen, Ogaref, and others of their time, exists to-day in those of very many so-called educated people, who hold the same views. A man desires to lead a good life, but that consecutiveness which is indispensable for this is lost in the society in which he lives. As, fifty years ago, Ogaref, Herzen, and others, so also the majority of men of the present day are persuaded that to lead an effeminate life, to eat sweet and fat dishes, delighting oneself in every way and satisfying all one's desires, does not hinder one from living a good life. But as it is evident that a righteous life in their case does not result, they give themselves up to pessimism, and say, "Such is the tragical fate of man."

What is also strange about the case is that these people know that the distribution of pleasures among men is unequal, and they regard this inequality as an evil and wish to correct it, and yet they do not cease to strive toward the augmentation of their pleasures, *i.e.* toward the augmentation of the inequality of the distribution of pleasures. In acting thus, these people are like men who, having entered before others into an orchard, hasten to gather all the fruit they can lay their hands on; and yet would like to organize a more equal distribution of the fruit of the orchard between themselves and the late-comers, while they continue to pluck all the fruit they come across.

VII

The delusion that men, while addicting themselves to their desires and regarding this life of desire as good, can nevertheless lead a good, useful, just, and loving life, is so astonishing that men of later generations will, I should think, simply fail to understand what the men of our time meant by the words "good life," when they said that the gluttons, the effeminate, lustful sluggards of our wealthy classes led good lives. Indeed, one need only put aside, for a time, the customary view of the life of our wealthy classes, and look at it, — I do not say from the Christian point of view, but from the heathen standpoint of common justice, in order to be convinced that, living amidst the violation of the plainest laws of justice or fairness, such as even children in their games think it wrong to violate, we, men of the wealthy classes, have no right even to talk about a good life.

Any man of our society who would, — I do not say begin a good life, but even begin to make some little approach toward it, must first of all cease to lead a bad life, must begin to destroy those conditions of an evil life with which he finds himself surrounded.

How often one hears, as an excuse for not reforming our lives, the argument, that any act which is contrary to the usual mode of life would be unnatural, ludicrous, — would look like a desire to show off and would therefore not be a good action. This argument seems framed expressly to prevent people from ever changing their evil lives. If all our life were good, just, kind, then and only then would an action in conformity with the usual mode of life be good. If one half of our life were good and the other half bad, then there would be as much chance of an action out of conformity with the usual mode of life being good as of its being bad. But when life is altogether bad, and irregular, as is the case in our upper classes, then a man cannot perform one good action without disturb-

ing the usual current of life. He can do a bad action without disturbing this current, but not a good one.

A man accustomed to the life of our well-to-do classes cannot lead a righteous life without first coming out of those conditions of evil in which he is immersed, — he cannot begin to do good until he has ceased to do evil. It is impossible for a man living in luxury to lead a righteous life. All his efforts after goodness will be in vain, until he changes his life, until he performs that work which stands before him first in sequence. A good life according to the heathen view, and still more according to the Christian one, is measured solely, nor can it be measured in any other way, by the mathematical relation of love for self, and love for others. The less there is of love for self, with all the ensuing care about self and the selfish demands made upon the labor of others, and the more there is of love for others, with the resultant care for and labor bestowed upon others, the better is the life.

Thus has righteousness of life been understood by all the sages of the world and all true Christians, and in exactly the same way do all men understand it now. The more a man gives to others and the less he demands for himself, the better he is; the less he gives to others and the more he demands for himself, the worse he is.

If we move the fulcrum of a lever from the long end to the short one, this will not only elongate the long arm, but will also reduce the short one. So also if a man, possessing a certain faculty, love, augment his love and care for himself, he will thereby diminish his power of loving and caring for others, not only in proportion to the love he has transferred to himself, but in a much greater degree. Instead of feeding others a man eats too much himself; by so doing he not only diminishes the possibility of giving away the surplus, but, by overeating, he deprives himself of power to help others.

In order to love others in reality and not in word only, one must cease to love oneself also in reality and not in word. In most cases it happens thus: we think we love

others, we assure ourselves and others that it is so, but we love them only in words, while ourselves we love in reality. Others we forget to feed and put to bed, ourselves — never. Therefore, in order really to love others in deed, we must learn not to love ourselves in deed, learn to forget to feed ourselves and put ourselves to bed, exactly as we forget to do these things for others.

We say of an effeminate person, accustomed to lead a luxurious life, that he is a "good man" and "leads a good life." But such a person, — whether man or woman, — although he may possess the most amiable traits of character, meekness, good-nature, etc., cannot lead a good life, any more than a knife of the very best workmanship and steel can be sharp and cut well, without the process of sharpening, *i.e.* preparation. To be good and lead a good life means to give to others more than one takes from them. Whereas an effeminate man, accustomed to a luxurious life, cannot do this, first because he himself is always in want of much (and this, not on account of his selfishness, but because he is accustomed to luxury, and it is painful for him to be deprived of that to which he is accustomed); and secondly, because by consuming all that he receives from others he weakens himself and renders himself unfit to labor, and therefore unfit to serve others. An effeminate man who sleeps long upon a soft bed, eats and drinks abundance of fat, sweet food, is always dressed cleanly and suitably to the temperature, who has never accustomed himself to the effort of laborious work, can do very little.

We are so accustomed to our own lies and the lies of others, and it is so advantageous for us not to see through the lies of others, in order that they may not see through ours, that we are not in the least astonished at, and do not doubt the truth of, the assertion of the virtuousness, sometimes even the sanctity, of people who are leading a perfectly loose life.

A person, man or woman, sleeps on a spring bed with two mattresses, and two smooth, clean sheets, and feather pillows in pillow cases. At the bedside is a rug, that the feet may not get cold on stepping out of bed, notwith-

standing that slippers also lie by the bedside. Here also are to be found the necessary utensils so that he need not leave the house, — whatever uncleanliness he may produce will all be carried away and made tidy. The windows are covered with curtains, that the daylight may not awaken him, and he sleeps as long as he is inclined. Besides all this, measures are taken that the room may be warm in winter and cool in summer, and that he may not be disturbed by the noise of flies or other insects. While he sleeps, water, hot and cold, for his ablutions, sometimes baths and preparations for shaving, are provided. Tea and coffee are also prepared, stimulating drinks to be taken immediately upon rising. Boots, shoes, galoshes, several pairs soiled the previous day, are already being cleaned and made to shine like glass, freed from every speck of dust. Similarly are cleaned various garments, soiled on the preceding day, differing in texture, to suit not only summer and winter, but also spring, autumn, rainy, damp, and warm weather. Clean linen, washed, starched, and ironed, is being made ready with studs, shirt buttons, buttonholes, all carefully inspected by specially appointed people.

If the person be active he rises early — at seven o'clock, *i.e.* still two or three hours later than those who are making all these preparations for him. Besides preparing clothes for the day and covering for the night, there is also a costume and foot-gear for the time of dressing: dressing-gown and slippers. So he undertakes his washing, cleaning, brushing, for which several kinds of brushes are used, as well as soap and a great quantity of water. (Many English men and women for some reason or other are specially proud of using a great deal of soap and pouring a large quantity of water over themselves.) Then he dresses, brushes his hair before a special kind of looking-glass (different from those that hang in almost every room in the house), takes the things he needs, such as spectacles or eye-glasses, and then distributes, in different pockets, a clean pocket-handkerchief, a watch with a chain, though in almost every room he goes to there will be a clock, money of various

kinds, small change, often in a specially contrived case, which saves him the trouble of looking for the required coin, and bank-notes; also visiting cards on which is printed his name, saving him the trouble of saying or writing it, pocket-book, and pencil. In the case of women, the toilet is still more complicated: corsets, arranging of long hair, adornments, laces, elastics, ribbons, ties, hairpins, pins, brooches.

But at last all is complete and the day commences, generally with eating; tea and coffee are drunk with a great quantity of sugar, bread made of the finest white flour is eaten with large quantities of butter and sometimes the flesh of pigs. The men for the most part smoke cigars or cigarettes at this time, and read the newly arrived papers. Then they leave the house for their office or business, or drive in carriages, produced specially to move such people about. Then comes a luncheon of slain beasts, birds, and fish, followed by a dinner consisting, if it be very modest, of three courses, dessert, and coffee. Then playing at cards and playing music, — or the theater, reading, and conversation, in soft spring arm-chairs, by the light of intensified and shaded light of candles, gas, or electricity. After this tea, again eating supper, and again to bed, — shaken up and prepared with clean linen, and washed utensils to be again made foul.

Thus pass the days of a man of modest life, of whom, if he be good-natured and do not possess any habits specially obnoxious to those about him, it is said that he leads a good life.

But a good life is the life of a man who does good to others; and can a man accustomed to live thus do good to others? Before he can do good to men he must cease to do evil. Reckon up all the harm such a man, often unconsciously, does to others, and you will see that he is far indeed from doing good; he would have to perform many acts of heroism in order to redeem the evil he commits, whereas he is too much enfeebled by his life full of desires to perform any such acts. He might sleep with more advantage,

both physical and moral, lying on the floor, wrapped in his cloak, as Marcus Aurelius did; and thus he might save all the labor and trouble involved in the manufacture of mattresses, springs, and pillows, as also the daily labor of the laundress, — one of the weaker sex burdened by the bearing and nursing of children, — who washes linen for this strong man. By going to bed earlier and getting up earlier he might save window-curtains and the evening lamp. He might sleep in the same shirt he wears during the day, might step barefooted upon the floor, and go out into the yard; he might wash at the well, — in a word, he might live like those who work for him, and might thus save all this work that is done for him. He might save all the labor expended upon his clothing, his refined food, his recreations. And he knows under what conditions all these labors are performed: how in performing them men perish, suffer, and often hate those that take advantage of their poverty to force them to do it.

How then is such a man to do good to others, and to lead a righteous life, without abandoning this effeminate, luxurious life?

But we need not speak of how other people appear in our eyes, — every one must see and feel this with regard to himself.

I cannot but repeat this same thing again and again, notwithstanding the cold and hostile silence with which my words are received. A moral man, living a life of comfort, a man even of the middle class (I will not speak of the upper classes, who daily consume, to satisfy their caprices, the results of hundreds of working days), cannot live quietly, knowing that all that he is using is produced by the labor and crushed lives of the working-people, who are dying without hope, ignorant, drunken, dissolute, half savage creatures, employed in mines, factories, and at agricultural labor, producing the articles that he uses.

At the present moment I, who am writing this, and you who will read it, whoever you may be, both you and I have

wholesome, sufficient, perhaps abundant, luxurious food, pure, warm air to breathe, winter and summer clothing, various recreations, and, most important of all, we have leisure by day and undisturbed repose at night. And here, by our side, live the working-people, who have neither wholesome food, nor healthful lodgings, nor sufficient clothing, nor recreations, and who, above all, are deprived not only of leisure, but even of rest: old men, children, women, worn out by labor, by sleepless nights, by disease, who spend their whole lives providing for us those articles of comfort and luxury which they do not possess, and which are for us not necessities, but superfluities. Therefore, a moral man, I do not say a Christian, but simply a man professing humane views or merely justice, cannot but wish to change his life and cease to use articles of luxury produced under such conditions.

If a man really pities those that manufacture tobacco, then the first thing he will naturally do will be to cease smoking, because by continuing to smoke and buy tobacco he encourages the preparation of tobacco by which men's health is destroyed. And so with every other article of luxury. If a man can still continue to eat bread even under the present conditions of labor and hard work by which it is produced, this is owing to his inability to deny himself what is indispensable. But with regard to things which are not only unnecessary, but even superfluous, there can be no other conclusion than this, that if I pity men engaged in the manufacture of certain articles, then I shall in no wise accustom myself to require such articles.

But in these days men argue otherwise. They invent the most various and intricate arguments, but never say what naturally occurs to every plain man. According to them it is not at all necessary to abstain from luxuries. One can sympathize with the condition of the workingmen, deliver speeches and write books in their behalf, and at the same time continue to profit by the labor that one deems ruinous to them.

According to one argument it appears that I may

profit by the ruinous labors of the working-men, because, if I do not, another will. Something like the argument that I must drink wine that is injurious to me, because it has been bought, and, if I do not drink it, others will do so.

According to another argument, it is even beneficial to the working-men to employ their labors in producing luxuries, as in this way we provide them with money, *i.e.* the means of subsistence; as if we could not provide them with the means of subsistence in any other way than by making them produce articles injurious to them and superfluous to us.

But according to the argument now most widely spread, it appears that, since there is such a thing as division of labor, any work upon which a man is engaged, whether he be a government official, priest, landowner, manufacturer, or merchant, is so useful that it fully compensates for the labor of the working-classes by which he profits. One serves the State, another the Church, a third science, a fourth art, and a fifth serves those who serve the State, science, and art; and all are firmly convinced that what they give to mankind certainly compensates for all they take. And it is astonishing how, while continually augmenting their luxurious requirements without increasing their activity, these people continue to be certain that their activity compensates for all that they consume.

Whereas, if you listen to these people's judgment of one another, it appears that each individual is far from being worth what he consumes. Government officials say that the work of the landlords is not worth what they spend, landlords say the same about merchants, and merchants about government officials, and so on. But this does not disconcert them, and they continue to assure men that they, each of them, profit by the labor of others exactly in proportion as they give to others. So that the payment is not determined by the work, but the value of the imaginary work is determined by the payment. So do they assure each other, but they know perfectly well in the depth of their soul that all their

arguments do not justify them, that they are not at all required by the working-men, and that they profit by the labor of these men, not on account of any division of labor, but simply because they have the power to do so, and because they are so perverted that they cannot dispense with this labor.

And all this arises from people imagining that it is possible to lead a good life, without first acquiring the first quality which is necessary for a righteous life.

And this first quality is temperance.

VIII

There never has been, and cannot be, a righteous life without temperance. Apart from temperance no righteous life is imaginable. The attainment of righteousness must commence with it.

There is a scale of virtues, and it is necessary, if one would mount the higher steps, to begin with the lowest; and the first virtue a man must acquire, if he wishes to acquire the others, is that which the ancients called *ἐγκράτεια* or *σωφροσύνη*, *i.e.* reasonableness or self-control.

If in the Christian teaching temperance was included in the conception of self-renunciation, still the order of succession remains the same, and the acquirement of no Christian virtue is possible without temperance, — and this not because such a rule has been invented by any one, but because such is the essential nature of the matter.

But even temperance, the first step in every righteous life, is not attainable all at once, but only by degrees.

Temperance is the liberation of man from desires, — their subordination to reasonableness, *σωφροσύνη*. But a man's desires are many and various, and in order successfully to contend with them he must begin with the fundamental ones, — those upon which the more complicated ones have grown up, and not with those complex lusts which have grown up upon the fundamental ones.

There are complex lusts, like that of the adornment of the body, sports, amusements, idle talk, inquisitiveness, and many others; and there are also fundamental desires, gluttony, idleness, sexual love. And one must begin to contend with these lusts from the beginning, not with the complex, but with the fundamental ones, and that also in a definite order. And this order is determined both by the nature of things, and also by the tradition of human wisdom.

A man who eats too much cannot strive against laziness, while a gluttonous and idle man will never be able to contend with sexual lust. Therefore, according to all the moral teachings, the effort toward temperance commences with a struggle against the lust of gluttony, — commences with fasting. In our time, however, every serious relation to the attainment of a good life has been so long and so completely lost, that not only is the very first virtue, — temperance, — without which the others are unattainable, regarded as superfluous, but the order of succession necessary for the attainment of this first virtue is also disregarded, and fasting is quite forgotten, or is looked upon as a silly superstition, and utterly unnecessary.

And yet, just as the first condition of a good life is temperance, so the first condition of a life of temperance is fasting.

One can wish to be good, one can dream of goodness, without fasting; but to *be* good without fasting is as impossible as it is to advance without getting up on to one's feet.

Fasting is an indispensable condition of a good life, whereas gluttony is, and always has been, the first sign of the opposite, a bad life; and unfortunately this vice is in the highest degree characteristic of the life of the majority of the men of our time.

Look at the faces and figures of the men of our circle and day, — on many of those faces with their pendent cheeks and double chins, those corpulent limbs and prominent abdomens, lies the indelible seal of a dissolute life. Nor can it be otherwise. Consider our life,

the actuating motive of the majority of the men of our society; ask yourself what is the chief interest of this majority? And, however strange it may appear to us who are accustomed to hide our real interests and profess false, artificial ones, you will see that the chief interest of their life is the satisfaction of the palate, — the pleasure of eating, gluttony. From the poorest to the richest, eating is, I think, the chief aim, — the chief pleasure of our life.

Poor working-people form an exception only inasmuch as want prevents their addicting themselves to this passion. No sooner have they the time and means than, in imitation of the higher classes, they procure what is sweetest and most delectable, and eat and drink as much as they can. The more they eat the more do they deem themselves, not only happy, but also strong and healthy. And in this conviction they are encouraged by the upper classes, who regard food in precisely the same way. The educated classes imagine that happiness and health (as medical men assure them, stating that the most expensive food, meat, is the most wholesome) consist in devouring savory, nourishing, easily digested food, though they try to conceal this.

Look at rich people's lives, listen to their conversation. What lofty subjects seem to occupy them: philosophy, science, art, poetry, the distribution of wealth, the welfare of the people, and the education of the young; but all this is, for the immense majority, a sham; all this occupies them in the intervals of business, real business, between luncheon and dinner, while the stomach is full, and it is impossible to eat more. The only real, living interest of the majority of both men and women is eating, especially after early youth. How to eat, what to eat, where, when?

No solemnity, no rejoicing, no consecration, no opening of anything can dispense with eating. Look at people traveling. In their case it is especially evident. "Museums, libraries, parliament — how very interesting! But where shall we dine? Who provides the best food?" Look at people when they come together

for dinner, dressed up, perfumed, around a table decorated with flowers, how joyfully they rub their hands and smile.

If we could look into the hearts of the majority of people, what should we find they most desire? Appetite for breakfast, for dinner. What is the severest punishment from infancy upward? To be put on bread and water. What artisans get the highest wages? Cooks. What is the chief interest of the mistress of the house? To what subject does the conversation of middle-class housewives generally tend? And if the conversation of the members of the higher classes does not tend in the same direction, it is not because they are better educated or are occupied with higher interests, but simply because they have a housekeeper or a butler who relieves them of all anxiety about their dinner.

But once deprive them of this convenience, and you will see what causes them most anxiety. It all comes round to the subject of eating, the price of grouse, the best way of making coffee, of baking sweet cakes, etc. Men come together, whatever the occasion, — a christening, a funeral, a wedding, the consecration of a church, the departure or arrival of a friend, the consecration of regimental colors, the celebration of a memorable day, the death or birth of a great scientist, philosopher, teacher of morality, — men come together as if occupied by the most lofty interests. So they say; but it is only a pretense: they all know that there will be eating — good, savory food — and drinking, and it is chiefly this that brings them together.

For several days before animals have been slaughtered, baskets of provisions brought from gastronomic shops; cooks and their helpers, kitchen boys and maids, specially attired in clean, starched frocks and caps, have been "at work." "Chefs," receiving $250 a month and more, have been occupied in giving instructions. Cooks have been chopping, kneading, roasting, arranging, adorning. With like solemnity and importance a master of the ceremonies has been working, calculating, pondering, adjusting with his eye, like an artist. A gardener

has been employed upon the flowers. Scullery maids .... An army of men has been at work, the result of thousands of working days are being swallowed up, and all this that people may come together to talk about some great teacher of science or morality, or to recall the memory of a deceased friend, or to greet a young couple just entering upon a new life.

In the middle and lower classes it is perfectly evident that every festivity, every funeral or wedding, means gluttony. There the matter is so understood. To such an extent is gluttony the motive of the assembly that in Greek and in French the same word means both "wedding" and "feast." But in the upper classes, among the refined who have long possessed wealth, great skill is used to conceal this and to make it appear that eating is a secondary matter, necessary only for appearance. And this pretense is easy, as in the majority of cases the guests are satiated in the true sense of the word, — they are never hungry.

They pretend that dinner, eating, is not necessary to them, is even a burden; but this is a lie. Try giving them, instead of the refined dishes they expect, I do not say bread and water, but porridge or gruel or something of that kind, and see what a storm it will call forth, and how evident will become the real truth, namely, that the chief interest of the assembly is, not the ostensible one, but — gluttony.

Look at what men sell; go through a town and see what men buy: — articles of adornment and things to devour. And indeed this must be so, it cannot be otherwise. It is possible not to think about eating, — to keep this lust under control only when a man does not eat except in obedience to necessity; but if a man *ceases* to eat only in obedience to necessity, *i.e.* when the stomach is full, then all this cannot be otherwise. If men love the pleasure of eating, if they allow themselves to love this pleasure, if they find it good (as is the case with the vast majority of men in our time, and with educated men quite as much as uneducated, although they pretend that it is not so), then there is no

limit to the augmentation of this pleasure, no limit beyond which it may not grow. The satisfaction of a need has limits, but pleasure has none. For the satisfaction of our needs, it is necessary and sufficient to eat bread, porridge, or rice; for the augmentation of pleasure there is no end to the flavorings and seasonings.

Bread is a necessary and sufficient food. (This is proved by the millions of men who are strong, active, healthy, and hard-working, on rye-bread alone.) But it is pleasanter to eat bread with some flavoring. It is well to soak the bread in water boiled with meat. Still better to put into this water some vegetable, or better yet, several vegetables. It is well to eat meat. And meat is better not stewed, but only roasted. And better still with butter, and underdone, and then only certain parts of the meat. And add to this vegetables and mustard. And drink wine with it, red wine for preference. One does not need any more, but one can eat some fish, if it is well flavored with sauces, and swallowed down with white wine. It would seem as if one could get through nothing more, either rich or savory, but a sweet dish can still be eaten, in summer ices, in winter compote, preserves, and the like. And thus we have a dinner, a modest dinner. The pleasure of such a dinner can be greatly increased. And it is augmented, and there is no limit to this increase: stimulating snacks, "zakouskas" before dinner, and entremets and desserts, and various combinations of savory things, and flowers and decorations and music during dinner.

And, strange to say, men who daily overeat themselves at such dinners, — in comparison with which the feast of Belshazzar, which evoked the prophetic warning, was nothing, — are naïvely persuaded that they may at the same time lead a moral life.

IX

Fasting is an indispensable condition of a good life; but in fasting, as in temperance in general, the question arises with what shall we begin, how to fast, — how

often to eat, what to eat, what to avoid eating? And as we can do no work seriously without regarding the necessary order of sequence, so also we cannot fast without knowing where to begin, — with what to commence temperance in food.

Fasting! And moreover the analysis of how to fast, and where to begin. This notion seems ridiculous to the majority of men.

I remember how once an evangelical preacher who was attacking monastic asceticism and priding himself on his originality said to me, "My Christianity is not concerned with fasting and privations, but with beefsteaks." Christianity, or virtue in general — with beefsteaks!

During that long period of darkness and of the absence of all guidance, heathen or Christian, so many wild, immoral ideas got infused into our life, especially into that lower region concerning the first steps toward a good life, — our relation to food, to which no one paid any attention, — that it is difficult for us even to understand the audacity and senselessness of upholding Christianity or virtue with beefsteaks.

We are not horrified by this association solely because a strange thing has befallen us. We look and see not; listen and hear not. There is no bad odor, no sound, no monstrosity, to which man cannot become accustomed, so that he ceases to remark that which would strike a man unaccustomed to it. Precisely so it is in the moral region. Christianity and morality with beefsteaks!

A few days ago I visited the slaughter-house in our town of Tula. It is constructed according to the new and improved system practised in large towns, with a view to the animals suffering as little as possible. It was on a Friday, two days before Trinity Sunday. There were many cattle there.

Long before this, when reading the excellent book, "The Ethics of Diet," I had wished to visit a slaughter-house, in order to see with my own eyes the truth of the matter brought in question when vegetarianism is discussed. But at first I felt ashamed to do so, as

one is always ashamed of going to look at suffering which one knows is about to take place, but cannot avert; and so I kept putting off my visit.

But a little while ago I met on the road a butcher returning to Tula after a visit to his home. He was not as yet an experienced butcher, and his duty was to stab with a knife. I asked him whether he did not feel sorry to kill animals. And he gave me the usual answer: "Why should I feel sorry? It is necessary."

But when I told him that eating meat is not necessary, but is only a luxury, he agreed, and then he admitted that he was sorry.

"But what can I do? I must earn my bread," he said. "At first I was *afraid* to kill. My father, he never even killed a chicken in all his life."

The majority of Russians cannot kill, they feel pity, and express it by the words "*to be afraid.*" This man had also been afraid, but he was so no longer. He told me that most of the work was done on Fridays, when it continues until the evening.

Not long ago I also talked with a retired soldier, a butcher, and he too was astonished at my assertion that it was a pity to kill, and said the usual things about its being ordained; but afterward he agreed with me: "Especially when they are quiet, tame cattle. They come, poor things, and trust you. It is very pitiful."

This is dreadful. Not the suffering and death of the animals, but that a man suppresses within himself, unnecessarily, the highest spiritual capacity, that of sympathy and pity toward living creatures like himself, and by violating himself becomes cruel. And how deeply seated in the human heart is the injunction not to kill animals!

Once, when walking near Moscow, I was offered a lift by some carmen who were going from Serpukhovo to a neighboring forest to fetch wood. It was the Thursday before Easter. I was seated in the first cart, with the izvoshchik, a strong, red, coarse muzhik, who evidently drank. On entering one village we saw a well-fed, naked, pink pig being dragged out of the first yard to be slaughtered. It was squealing in a desperate

voice, resembling the shriek of a man. Just as we were passing they began to kill it. One of the men gashed its throat with a knife. The pig squealed still more loudly and piercingly, broke away from them, and ran off covered with blood. Being near-sighted, I did not see all the details. I saw only the human-looking pink body of the pig, and heard its desperate squeal; but the carter saw all the details and watched closely. They caught the pig, knocked it down, and finished cutting its throat. When its squeals ceased the izvoshchik sighed heavily. "Do men really not have to answer for this?" he said.

So strong is man's aversion to all killing; but by example, by encouraging greediness, by the assertion that God has allowed it, and, above all by habit, people are entirely deprived of this natural feeling.

On Friday I went to Tula, and meeting a gentle, kind acquaintance of mine, I invited him to accompany me.

"Yes, I have heard that the arrangements are good, and have been wishing to go and see it; but if they are slaughtering, I will not go in."

"Why not? That is just what I want to see! If we eat meat, it must be killed."

"No, no, I cannot."

It is worth while to remark that this man is a sportsman, and himself kills beasts and birds.

So we went to the slaughter-house. Even at the entrance one could perceive the heavy, disgusting, fetid smell of carpenter's glue or paint on glue. The nearer we approached, the stronger became the smell. The building is of red brick, very large, with vaults and high chimneys. We entered the gates. To the right was a spacious inclosed yard, three-quarters of an acre in extent, — twice a week cattle are driven in here for sale, — and adjoining this inclosure was the porter's lodge. To the left were the "chambers," as they are called, *i.e.* rooms with arched entrances, sloping asphalt floors, and contrivances for the moving and hanging up of carcasses. On a bench against the wall of the porter's lodge were seated half a dozen butchers, in frocks covered with blood, their tucked-up sleeves disclosing their muscular

arms, also besmeared with blood. Their work had been completed half an hour ago, so that day we could only see the empty "chambers." Notwithstanding that these chambers were open on both sides, there was an oppressive smell of warm blood, the floor was brown and shining, with congealed black blood in the cavities.

One of the butchers described the process of slaughtering, and showed us the place where it was done. I did not quite understand him, and formed for myself a wrong, but very horrible, idea of the way the animals are slaughtered; and I fancied that, as is often the case, the reality would very likely produce upon me a weaker impression than the imagination. But in this I was mistaken.

The next time I visited the slaughter-house I went in time. It was the Friday before Trinity. It was a warm day in June. The smell of glue and blood was even stronger and more penetrating than on my first visit. The work was at its height. The dusty yard was full of cattle, and animals had been driven into all the inclosures beside the chambers.

In the street, before the entrance, stood carts to which oxen, calves, and cows were tied. Other carts drawn by good horses and filled with live calves, their heads hanging down and swaying about, drew up and were unloaded; and similar carts containing the carcasses of oxen, with trembling legs sticking out, with heads and bright red lungs and brown livers, drove away from the slaughter-house. By the fence stood the cattle-dealers' horses. The dealers themselves, in their long coats, with their whips and knouts in their hands, were walking about the yard, either marking with tar the cattle belonging to the same owner, or bargaining or else directing the passage of the oxen and bulls from the great yard into the inclosures which led into the chambers. These men were evidently all preoccupied with money dealings and calculations, and any thought as to whether it was right or wrong to kill these animals was as far from their minds as questions about the chemical composition of the blood that covered the floor of the chambers.

No butchers were to be seen in the yard; they were all in the chambers, at work. That day about a hundred head of cattle were slaughtered. I was about to enter one of the chambers, but stopped short at the door. I stopped because the chamber was crowded with carcasses being moved about, and also because blood was flowing below and dropping from above. All the butchers present were besmeared with blood, and, had I entered, I should certainly have been covered with it. One suspended carcass was being taken down, another was being moved toward the door, a third, a slaughtered ox, was lying with its white legs raised, while a butcher with his strong hand was ripping up its tight-stretched hide.

Through the door opposite to the one at which I was standing, a big, red, well-fed ox was led in. Two men were dragging it, and hardly had it entered when I saw a butcher raise a knife above its neck and stab it. The ox, as if all four legs had suddenly given way, fell heavily upon its belly, immediately turned over on one side, and began to work its legs and all its hind quarters. Another butcher immediately threw himself upon the ox from the side opposite to the twitching legs, caught its horns, twisted its head down to the ground, while another butcher cut its throat with a knife. From beneath the head there flowed a stream of blackish red blood, which a besmeared boy caught in a tin basin. All the time this was going on, the ox kept incessantly twitching its head as if trying to get up, and waved its four legs in the air. The basin was quickly filling, but the ox still lived, and, its stomach heaving heavily, both hind and fore legs worked so violently that the butchers held aloof. When one basin was full, the boy carried it away on his head to the albumen factory, while another boy placed a fresh basin which also began to fill up. But still the ox heaved its body and worked its hind legs.

When the blood ceased to flow, the butcher raised the animal's head and began to skin it. The ox continued to writhe. The head, stripped of its skin, showed red with white veins, and kept the position given

it by the butcher; on both sides hung the skin. Still the animal did not cease to writhe. Then another butcher caught hold of one of the legs, broke it, and cut it off. In the remaining legs and the stomach the convulsions still continued. The other legs were cut off and thrown aside, together with those of other oxen belonging to the same owner. Then the carcass was dragged away and hung up, and here the convulsions ceased.

Thus I looked on from the door at the second, third, fourth ox. With all it was the same: the same cutting off of the head with the tongue bitten, and the same convulsed members. The only difference was that the butcher did not always strike at once so as to make the animal fall. Sometimes he missed his aim, upon which the ox leaped up, roared, and, covered with blood, tried to escape. But then his head was pulled under the bar, struck a second time, and he fell.

I afterward entered by the door through which the oxen were led in. Here I saw the same thing, only nearer and therefore more plainly. I also saw here what I had not seen before: how the oxen were forced to enter the door. Each time an ox was seized in the inclosure and pulled forward by a rope tied to its horns; the animal, smelling blood, refused to advance, sometimes bellowed and drew back. Two men were unable to drag it in by force, so one of the butchers went round each time and grasped the animal's tail and twitched it, breaking the stump so that the gristle crackled, — then the ox advanced.

When they had finished with the cattle of one owner, they brought in those of another. The first animal of this next lot was not an ox, but a bull — a fine, well-bred creature, black with white spots on legs, young, muscular, full of energy. He was dragged forward, lowering his head and resisted sturdily. But the butcher, who followed behind, seized the tail, — like an engine-driver grasping the handle of the whistle, — twisted it, the gristle cracked, and the bull rushed forward, upsetting the men who held the rope. Then

it stopped, squinting with its black eyes, the white of which had filled with blood. But again the tail cracked, and the bull sprang forward and reached the required spot. The striker approached, took aim, and struck. But the blow missed the mark. The bull leaped up, shook its head, roared, and, covered with blood, got free and rushed back. The men in the doorway all sprang aside. But the butchers, with the dash of men inured to danger, quickly caught the rope, again the tail operation, and again the bull was in the chamber, where he was dragged under the bar, from which he did not again escape. The striker quickly took aim at the spot where the hair divides like a star, and, notwithstanding the blood, found it, struck, and the fine animal, full of life, fell, its head and legs writhing as it was bled and the head skinned.

"There, the cursed devil has fallen on the wrong side again," grumbled the butcher as he cut the skin from the head.

Five minutes later the head was stuck up, red instead of black, without skin, the eyes, that had shone with such splendid color five minutes before, fixed and glassy.

Afterward I went into the compartment where small animals are slaughtered,—a spacious chamber with asphalt floor, and tables with backs, on which sheep and calves are killed. Here the work was already finished; there were only two butchers in the chamber. One was blowing into the leg of a dead lamb and patting the swollen stomach with his hand; the other, a young fellow in a frock besmeared with blood, was smoking a cigarette. There was no one else in the long, dark chamber, pervaded with the smell of blood. After me there entered a man, apparently an ex-soldier, bringing in a young yearling ram, black with a white mark on its neck, with its legs tied. This animal he placed upon one of the tables, as if upon a bed. The old soldier greeted the butchers, with whom he was evidently acquainted, and began to ask about when their master let them have leave. The fellow with the cigarette approached with

a knife, sharpened it on the edge of the table, and answered that they were free on holidays. The live ram was lying as quietly as the dead inflated one, except that it was briskly wagging its short little tail, and its sides were heaving more quickly than usual. The soldier pressed down its uplifted head gently, without effort; the butcher, still continuing the conversation, grasped with his left hand the head of the ram, and cut its throat. The ram quivered, and the little tail stiffened and ceased to wave. The fellow, while waiting for the blood to flow, began to relight his cigarette, which had gone out. The blood flowed, and the ram began to writhe. The conversation continued without the slightest interruption.

And how about those hens and chickens which daily, in thousands of kitchens, with their heads cut off and streaming with blood, comically, dreadfully flop about, jerking their wings.

And you will see a kind, refined lady devour the carcasses of these animals, with full assurance that she is doing right, at the same time asserting two propositions, each of which bars out the other:

First, that she is, as her doctor assures her, so delicate that she cannot be sustained by vegetable food alone, and that for her feeble organism flesh food is indispensable; and secondly, that she is so sensitive that she is unable, not only herself to inflict suffering on animals, but even to bear the sight of suffering.

The truth of the matter is, she is weak, this poor lady, precisely because she has been taught to live upon food unnatural to man; and she cannot avoid causing suffering to animals, because she devours them.

X

We cannot pretend that we do not know this. We are not ostriches, and cannot believe that if we refuse to look at that which we do not wish to see it will not exist. This is especially the case when what we do not

wish to see is what we wish to eat. If it were really indispensable, or, if not indispensable, at least in some way useful, it would be another thing. But it is useful for nothing,[1] and serves only to develop animal feelings, to excite desire, to promote fornication and drunkenness.

And this is continually being confirmed by young, kind, undepraved people, — especially women and girls, — feeling, without knowing how it logically follows, that virtue is incompatible with beefsteaks, and giving up meat as soon as they desire to live good lives.

What, then, do I wish to say? That in order to be moral, people must cease to eat meat? Not at all.

I only wish to say that for a good life a certain order of good deeds is indispensable; that if a man's aspiration toward right living be serious, it will inevitably follow one definite sequence; and that in this sequence the first virtue a man will strive after will be temperance, self-renunciation. And in seeking to be temperate a man will inevitably follow one definite sequence, and in this sequence the first thing will be temperance in food, fasting. And in fasting, if he be really and seriously seeking to live a good life, the first thing from which he will abstain will always be the use of animal food, because, to say nothing of the excitation of the passions caused by such food, its use is simply immoral, as it involves the performance of an act which is contrary to the moral feeling — killing; and is called forth only by greediness, and the desire for savory food.

The precise reason why abstinence from animal food will be the first act of fasting and of a moral life is admirably explained in the book, "The Ethics of Diet;" and not by one man only, but by all mankind in the person of its best representatives during all the conscious life of humanity.

[1] Let those who doubt this read those numerous books upon the subject, written by scientists and doctors, in which it is proved that meat is not necessary for the nourishment of man. And let them not listen to those old-fashioned doctors who defend the assertion that meat food is necessary, only because it has long been so regarded by themselves and their predecessors; who defend their opinion with tenacity and malevolence, as all that is old and outgrown is always defended. — AUTHOR'S NOTE.

But why, if the wrongfulness, *i.e.* the immorality, of animal food was so long ago known to humanity, have people not yet come to acknowledge this law? will be asked by those who are accustomed to be led rather by public opinion than by reason. The answer to this question is that the moral progress of humanity — which is the foundation of every other kind of progress — always takes place slowly; but that the sign of true, not casual, progress is its uninterruptedness and continual acceleration.

And so it is with the progress of vegetarianism. This progress is expressed both in the words of the writers cited in the above-mentioned book, and in the very life of mankind, which is continually advancing from the use of animal to that of vegetable food, both unconsciously and also consciously — in vegetarianism, which now manifests especial vigor and is attaining ever greater and greater dimensions. This movement has during the last ten years been steadily accelerating: more and more books and periodicals upon this subject appear every year; one meets more and more people who have given up animal food; and abroad, especially in Germany, England, and America, the number of vegetarian hotels and restaurants is increasing year by year.

This movement must cause especial joy to those whose life consists in seeking to found the kingdom of God upon earth, not because vegetarianism is in itself an important step toward that kingdom (all true steps are both important and unimportant), but because it is a sign that the aspiration of mankind toward moral perfection is serious and sincere, as it has taken the one unalterable order of succession natural to it, beginning with this first step.

One cannot fail to rejoice at this, as people could not fail to rejoice who, after striving to reach the upper story of a house by trying vainly and at random to climb the walls from different points, should at last begin to assemble at the first step of the staircase, and to crowd around it, convinced that there could be no way up except by this first step of the stairs.

1892.

THOUGHTS ON GOD[1]

I

GOD is for me what I strive for — what as I strive for it constitutes my life, and therefore for me He *is;* but He is necessarily such that I cannot comprehend or name Him.

If I understood Him, I should have reached Him, and there would be nothing to strive after and there would be no life. But, and this seems a contradiction, though I cannot understand or name Him, yet at the same time I know Him and the direction toward Him, and even of all my knowledge this is the most certain.

I do not comprehend Him, yet at the same time I am always anxious when I am without Him, and only when I am with Him am I not anxious. What is stranger still is that to know Him more and better than I do at present is not my desire now in this present life, neither is it necessary. I can draw nearer to Him, and I wish

[1] The first six sections of this article are taken from the work published in Geneva under the title *Ponyatiye o Boge* — "The Conception of God." The rest is a collection of extracts from his diaries, private letters, notebook jottings, draught manuscripts of unfinished papers, and various writings of the same kind.

Mr. V. Tchertkof, Tolstoï's former secretary, who has put them together, says: —

"The reader is requested to bear in mind that the thoughts here presented, not being originally intended by the author for publication, are not expressed as precisely and carefully as they would have been had he been preparing them for the general public; and also that the translation of writings of this character affords special difficulties, owing to their rough and unfinished form.

"In order, therefore, that the reader may both do justice to these expressions of thought and himself fully profit by them, it is desirable that he should endeavor to understand any verbal imperfections according to the spirit of the whole paper, and to fill up, in the sense most advantageous for the thought expressed, any omission he may remark."

to do so — in that is my life; but such drawing nearer in no way increases, and cannot increase, my knowledge.

Every endeavor of the imagination to know Him more definitely (for instance, as my Creator, or as a Merciful Being) removes me farther from Him, and prevents me drawing nearer to Him.

Stranger still, I can love truly — that is, more than myself or anything else — Him alone. This love only knows no check, no decrease (on the contrary, all is increase), no sensuality, no insincerity, no subserviency, no fear, no self-satisfaction. Only through this love does one love all that is good; so that one loves and lives only through Him and by Him.

This is how I think, or rather feel. I have only to add that the pronoun "He" somewhat destroys my idea of God: the word "He" somewhat diminishes Him.

To the definition of God I find it necessary to add Matthew Arnold's, which I have always kept in mind as expressing one aspect, and that the chief, in which God presents Himself to us. (Matthew Arnold deduces his definition from the Old Testament prophets, and, indeed, for the time previous to Christ, it is sufficiently complete.) According to Matthew Arnold God is that eternal, infinite "not ourselves" which "makes for righteousness." One may call it the law of human life, the will of God in relation to that part of men's life which is in their power. I say that this definition was sufficient up to the time of Christ, but by Christ it has been revealed to us that the fulfilment of this law, besides its external obligation to human reason, has also another and more simple inner motive which penetrates all man's being, namely, love: love, not of wife, or child, or country, but love of God — *God is Love*, — love of love — that very feeling of kindness, sympathy, and joy of life which constitutes man's natural, blissful, true life which knows no death.

II

I UNDERSTAND by the word "God" that whereby the knowledge of something higher — of righteousness, goodness, gentleness to another being, truth — came into my soul. Having realized this higher idea in my mind, I find in myself the life of God, and am satisfied with it. This higher idea is spirit; when my life is the movement and life of the spirit, then am I filled with something beautiful and joyous, and I do not seek the limits of my life, but I seek only union with that spirit which dwells as well in others as in me. Having realized in myself this higher thing — spirit, I make it manifest surrounding me, I diffuse *Him!* When I find in myself the spirit the highest thing, then I thereby recognize God.

By fulfilling God's will I realize God in myself, what He is. To behold Him, in other words to define Him completely and clearly to apprehend Him, is impossible for me. For me He is the Father of what I call the highest in me. Of course He requires that my life should be the realization of what is highest in the flesh, of what He produces in me.

III

IT may seem strange, but I must confess that I use the term "God" in different significations, depending on whom I am talking with, and what I am talking about. This is so if I employ it consciously. It often falls from my lips unconsciously, for example in the commonly used expressions: *Slava Bohu*, "Glory to God"; *S Bogom*, "Good-by," and the like.

In the first case, that is, when I use the term "God" consciously, it seems to me I very rarely use it separately. In connection with other expressions, it appears in such words as *zhit' po Bozhyi*, "to live in a godly manner." When I say this I really mean "to live righteously, lovingly, reasonably."

Hence, God is righteousness, love, the reason, all the higher limited significations.

I use the expression *Bog* — "God" — as synonymous with Creator with less clearness in my own mind. The Biblical despotic conception of God the Creator is not suited to my mind. The scientific conceptions in part merely complicate the Biblical conception, in part entirely destroy it, substituting for it the conception *chance* or *self-created force;* this also does not satisfy me. When I analyze my mental concept, I find only a commensurable cause which had no beginning. Here are the two principal meanings that I attribute to the word "God." The first I can call *practical* — reason, righteousness, love; the second, *theoretical* — final, endless cause.

Generally speaking, it is impossible to give an accurate definition to the word "God" and still more difficult to pass it by. The most veritable will be: *God is God*, as it is self-defining. Additional concepts will depend on what side you approach him from. Their infinite number is like an endless number of radii to the same center, or like a quantity of paths leading to one and the same mountain-top. And all these radii or paths are subjective.

IV

Besides the activities peculiar to man as an animal, he is conscious in himself of a still higher law of life, which in the first place subjects to him the whole domain of animal inclinations and repulsions; in the second place gives a man the only joyous possibility of perceiving life and the indestructibility of this life; in the third place, animates for him the whole world, even to the tiniest grain of sand, spiritualizes this life; and all the work of the world is for him a movement toward this one only higher law of life. Here is the foundation of the gospel. The gospel teaching takes a trait, an atom, of a man, torn by desire to live, leads him into the house of his parents and friends, and gives him the joy of nearness

and union with his parents. The man then feels, "His own has come to his own."

This is something vital which a man is conscious of in himself; this something vital gives him life, and the joy of life is the "Son of God" in man. And the work of a man exalts this Son of God, lives by it, is united with it. The material for this work is the very native environment in which a man lives, including his own body. You cannot get rid of this work, and a hundred lives like yours would not suffice to accomplish it; but nevertheless work on, and know that this work is the only thing needful, immortal. And whatever you do, you will do all, if only you really do all that you can do.

V

You wish to know how I understand God. Well, here is my answer: —

I believe in Christ and I understand with perfect clearness what He says about the Father, and I acknowledge His Sonship to the Father. I know that you understand it the same way, and that you ask me about something else: that is, What significance has the Father to the whole world and not to man only? This is what I think: I know that God the Father is the beginning, spirit, consciousness, love, thought, life — what is eternal, what is for the whole universe, as consciousness for man. If there is a bond connecting me with all the whole universe of animals and plants, that is the reason why. And everything fulfils His will and receives a blessing; man when he does not fulfil His will is conscious of it, and perishes in accordance with a law unalterable for the whole world, and knows this even while he perishes. This is all I can say hastily in regard to this. As one time I was thinking how painful it is that men do not live in accordance with God's will, suddenly it became clear to me that however a man lives he will always live so that the law will not be broken, and the loss will be man's. He has not fulfilled the law as a

man — he has fulfilled it as an animal, or lower still, as a mass of decomposing flesh. For me this became clear and consoling. In my mind the ordinary mistake is also clear: it is often thought that God exists only for Nature and not for me, or that God exists for me and not for the whole universe at the same time. I clearly understand the unity, the universal cause, for if I do not know it, I cannot think otherwise. My consciousness is the consciousness of the whole universe — in other words, is homogeneous.

VI

Life in me is consciousness. Consciousness is not mine — it does not depend on my will; it comes and goes as it wishes, but when it is in me then I am not less than it. I am perfectly conscious of my consciousness. Consciousness is the most unquestionable of all things that exist. Consciousness has no time or space; it has nothing personal, is not good or evil. I am alive while I am conscious, and when it is in me, I cannot be unconscious of it. This consciousness is also God. I cannot know what God is outside of me, just as I cannot know whence arises the consciousness in me — I know it when it is in me. I know at the same time that I and consciousness are not one, but two things, because consciousness may be for me a pain and a happiness, according as I treat it.

I remember the time when my consciousness poisoned my life. I remember how at that time I adapted myself to it; and now I know that it is the only thing that gives me happiness, and that outside of judgment, by it there is no true or inviolable happiness.

What adapted this consciousness to me was reason. Reason is the light that shines upon me through consciousness (the abode of life in me). I put it to myself thus: The temporary abode of life in me is a tunnel. Consciousness is a light. Reason is a lamp adapted to the tunnel. When I have come out of the tunnel, I

no longer need the lamp, but while I am in the tunnel the lamp is precious, as the light adapted to the tunnel. The adaptation of consciousness to me is to love, to serve my fellow-men, not to consider the mandates of consciousness, though they poison my comfort, as an unhappiness, but on the contrary as a salvation — in a word, this adaptation is also reason.

When I live in accordance with reason, then I am well off, that is, I am happy; when I live without reason, then I am in an evil state, in other words, I suffer from want of reason and melancholy, from the contrariety of consciousness and my passions.

In God there is neither good nor evil — that is to say, in the consciousness outside of me there is no good or evil. Good and evil exist only for me, and I can do either only for myself. Good is the service of consciousness, evil is the revolt against consciousness; but since consciousness is the life in me, so good is life and the service of life, while evil is the failure to comprehend life in oneself.

God, that is consciousness, is no respecter of persons; consciousness does not love and does not hate. Love is my sustenance, so that consciousness might become my delight. Consciousness in me has neither past nor present, and for that reason is eternal, and will not die. Here I am conscious, here I am eternal, because when I am conscious, I am no longer *I*, but consciousness only, eternal, not in the future, not at any past time, but now, at the present, because the present is eternal and endless. There is nothing eternal in the past, as in the future, because there is no future and no past — they only are presentations, they are only forms of actual thoughts — there is only the present and that is endless.

If a man rebels against consciousness, then for him immediately and forever the present perishes — he is in death; in other words, he is deprived of consciousness, and this death is absolute, without the slightest relief, since this death from a quarrel with consciousness means deprivation of all life. If a man, however, serves

consciousness with his reason, then he is in complete life, and for him there is no trace of death, nothing terrible and unknown — he is then endlessly alive, as alive as consciousness itself.

VII

One knows God, not so much through reason, nor even through the heart, but through one's feeling of complete dependence on Him, akin to the feeling experienced by an unweaned child in the arms of its mother. It does not know who holds it, warms it, feeds it; but it knows that there is this someone; and more than merely knows — it loves that being.

Formerly I witnessed the phenomena of life without thinking whence they came, or why I witnessed them.

Subsequently I realized that all I see is the outcome of light, which is understanding. And I was so glad to have brought everything into harmony, that I was quite satisfied in acknowledging the understanding alone to be the source of everything.

But after that I saw that the understanding is a light which reaches me through a kind of dim glass. I see the light, but its source I do not know. Yet I know that the source exists.

This same source of the light that enlightens me — a source I do not know, but the existence of which I do know — is God.

VIII

Yes, love is God.

Love — love him who has caused thee pain, whom thou hast blamed, disliked; and then all that which had concealed his soul from thee will disappear, and thou wilt, as through clear water, see at the bottom of his soul the divine essence of his love; and thou wilt not have to, thou wilt not be able to, pardon him; thou

wilt only have to pardon thyself for not having loved God in him in whom He was, and for not having seen Him through the absence of thy love.

Love is the manifestation within oneself (the consciousness) of God, and therefore the propensity to get out of oneself, to liberate oneself, to live a godly life. And this propensity calls forth God, *i.e.* love, in others.

This is not expressed clearly.

My chief idea is that love evokes love in others. God, having awakened in me, produces the awakening of the same God in others also.

To love means to desire that which the one we love desires. But men desire opposite things, whereas that only can be loved which desires one and the same thing. One and the same thing is desired only by God.

To love God means to desire that which He desires. And He desires universal welfare.

"Brethren, let us love one another. He that loveth is born of God and knoweth God, because (it is written 'God is Love,' but we ought to say) Love is God." But also God is love, *i.e.* we know God only in the form of love; and love is God, *i.e.* if we love, we are not God's, but God.

IX

It is astonishing how I could formerly fail to see the indubitable truth, that behind this world and our life in it, is some one, something, that knows why this world exists, and why we in it, like bubbles in boiling water, rise, burst, and disappear.

It is certain that something is being done in this world, and that by all living beings; being done by me, by my life. Otherwise, wherefore this sun, these seasons, and above all, wherefore this three-year-old child, frenzied with superabundance of life; that old woman who has outlived her reason, or yonder lunatic? These separate

beings, which in my eyes evidently have no meaning, and which are yet living so vigorously, are so tenacious of life, and in whom life is so firmly planted, those beings more than anything convince me that they are wanted for some purpose that is wise and good, and inaccessible to me.

X

Somehow, while praying to God, it became clear to me that God is indeed a real Being, Love — is that All which I just touch, and which I experience in the form of love. And this is not a feeling, not an abstraction, but a real Being; and I have felt Him.

All that I know, I know because there is a God, and because I know Him. Only upon this can one firmly base one's relations with other men and with oneself, as well as with life outside space and time. Not only do I regard this as not mystical, but I hold the opposite view to be mystical, whereas this is the most intelligible and accessible reality.

XI

Why are you downcast? You are waiting for something too great — waiting, it seems to me, for God in thunder and storm, and not in stillness. The best of it is that, as you say, you cannot "get away anywhere." In this the hand of God is most visible and palpable.

You say that I do not seem to acknowledge God. This is a misunderstanding. I acknowledge nothing but God.

I think I wrote and spoke to you about my definition of God, which I would now give in answer to the question, What is God? *God is that All, that infinite All, of which I am conscious of being a part, and therefore all in me is encompassed by God, and I feel Him in everything.*

And this is not at all a play of words; it is that by which I live.

What is God? Wherefore God?

God is that *un*limited *all* which I know within myself in a limited form. I am limited, God is infinite; I am a being which has lived sixty-three years, God lives eternally; I am a being which reasons within the limits of its understanding, God reasons without limit; I am a being which loves sometimes a little, God loves always infinitely. I am a part, He is all. I cannot understand myself otherwise than as a part of Him.

When an unsolved question torments one, then one feels oneself to be a diseased member of some whole, healthy body; one feels oneself to be an unsound tooth in a sound body, and asks the whole body to help the one member.

The whole body is God; the member is myself.

XII

One of the superstitions that most confuse our metaphysical conceptions, is the superstition that the world was created, that it arose out of nothing, and that there is a God-Creator.

In reality we have no ground for imagining a God-Creator, nor any necessity. The Chinese and Indians have no such conception, and moreover a Creator, a Providence, is incompatible with the Christian God-Father, God-Spirit, — the God who is Love, a particle of whom lives in me and constitutes my life, the manifestation and avocation of which particle constitutes the meaning of my life.

God the Creator is indifferent, and allows suffering and evil. God the Spirit delivers from suffering and evil, and is always perfect welfare. A God-Creator there is not. There is *myself* acknowledging the universe through the faculties given me, and inwardly

recognizing my Father-God. He is the origin of my spiritual self — the external world is only my limit.

People often speak of the evil which God causes to men (for instance, when they are overcome with grief at the loss of one they love), and while so saying and thinking, they imagine that they believe in God, and they pray to Him.

God does evil! And, if God does evil, He is not good, not Love; and, if He is not good, then He does not exist.

This comes of people being so certain that what they do wrongly is not only good but excellent — as when they affirm that to give all one's love to one's children is very good — so that when they experience the evil which is only the result of their own mistakes, their own sins, they blame, not themselves, but God. And they therefore, in the depth of their soul, acknowledge God to be evil, *i.e.* deny Him, and therefore do not receive consolation from Him.

One should do as do the Spirit-Wrestlers — bow down to the ground before every man, remembering that in him is God. If to bow physically is impracticable, we should at least do so spiritually.

XIII

The consciousness, the sensation of God who is living in me and acting through me, cannot be felt always.

There are activities to which one has got to give oneself up altogether, unlimitedly, without thinking of anything save that one thing. In these cases it is impossible to think of God; it would distract, and is unnecessary.

One should live simply, without exertion, giving oneself up to one's tendencies; but the moment there arise inward doubt, struggle, despondency, fear, ill-will, then immediately, recognizing in oneself one's spiritual being,

recognizing one's connection with God, one should transport oneself from the material into the spiritual region; and that not in order to escape the work of life, but, on the contrary, to gather strength for its accomplishment, for the victory over, the mastering of, the obstacle. Like a bird — to advance on one's legs with folded wings, but the moment an obstacle is encountered, then to unfold one's wings and fly up . . . and one finds relief, and one's burden disappears.

This is what has happened to me: I began to think more and more abstractedly about the problems of life — In what does life consist? What is its aim? What is love? — and I got farther and farther away, not only from the Old Testament conception of God the Creator, but also from the conception of Him as a Father, the righteous source of all life, and of my own being. And the devil ensnared me, and it began to enter my mind that it is possible, and especially desirable for union with the Chinese Confucians, with the Buddhists, and our own atheists and agnostics, altogether to avoid this conception. I thought it was possible to restrict oneself to the conception and acknowledgment of that God only which is in me, without acknowledging any God apart from that — without acknowledging the One who has implanted in me a particle of Himself. And, strange to say, I suddenly began to feel dull, depressed, and alarmed. I did not know the cause of this, but I felt that I had suddenly undergone a dreadful spiritual fall, had lost all spiritual joy and energy.

And then only did I comprehend that this had happened because I had deserted God. And I began to think, and, strange to say, to guess whether there be a God or not; and I found Him, as it were, afresh. And I was filled with such joy, and such a firm assurance did I gain of Him, and of the possibility and duty of communion with Him, and of His hearing me; and my joy grew so great that all these last days I have been experiencing the feeling that something very good has come to me, and I keep asking myself, "Why do I feel

so happy? Yes! God! There *is* a God, and I need be neither anxious nor afraid, but can only rejoice."

I am afraid that this feeling will pass away, will grow dull; but for the present it is very joyous. It is as if I had been within a hair's-breadth of losing, nay, had thought that I had actually lost, the Being dearest to me; and yet had not so lost Him, but had only realized His priceless worth. I hope, if it does pass away, that it will only be the ecstatic feeling, but that there will remain much of what I have newly gained.

Perhaps this is what some call the "living God"; if that be so, then I did very wrong toward them in contradicting them instead of agreeing with them.

The chief thing in this feeling is a consciousness of entire security, a consciousness that He *is*, that He is good, that He knows me, and that I am entirely surrounded by Him, that I have come from Him, and am going to Him, form a part of Him, am His child. All that seems bad, seems so only because I trust to myself and not in Him, and from this life, in which it is so easy to do His will (this will at the same time being mine), I cannot fall anywhere, except only into Him; and in Him is perfect joy and welfare.

All that I might write would not express what I have felt. Whether I am suffering physical or moral pain, whether my son is dying, or that which I love is perishing and I cannot help it, or sufferings are awaiting me,—suddenly the thought recurs to me: "And how about God?" and all becomes good and joyous and clear.

XIV

THERE is not one believing man to whom moments of doubt do not come—doubt in the existence of God. And these doubts are not harmful; on the contrary, they lead to a higher understanding of God.

That God, whom one knew, has become familiar, and one no more believes in Him. We entirely believe in God only when He discloses Himself afresh to us.

And he discloses Himself to us from a new side when we seek Him with all our soul.

I have been thinking much about God, about the essence of my life, and, as it seemed, only to feel doubtful as to both the one and the other; and I questioned the evidence of His existence. And then, not long ago, I simply felt the desire to lean myself upon faith in God, and in the imperishableness of my soul; and to my astonishment I felt such a firm, quiet assurance as I had never felt before. So that all the doubts and testings evidently not only did not weaken, but to an enormous extent confirmed, my faith.

One should never go to God, as it were "on purpose." "Now let me just go to God. I will begin to live according to God. I have been living according to the devil; let me now try to live according to God; who knows — perhaps no harm will come of it...."

There *is* harm in this, and great harm. Coming to God is something like getting married: one should do it only when one would be glad not to come to Him, or not to get married, but cannot help doing so. And therefore it is not that I would tell a man: "Go purposely into temptations"; but to him who formulates the question thus: "Well, and is it certain that I will not lose by going to God instead of to the devil?" — I would cry out as loud as I can: "Go, go to the devil, by all means to the devil!"

It is a hundred times better to get well scalded against the devil than to continually stand at the cross-roads, or insincerely go to God.

XV

I HAVE read Herbert Spencer's reply to Balfour,[1] the profession of agnosticism, as they now call atheism.

I mean that agnosticism, although it wishes to be something different from atheism by setting up the supposed impossibility of knowing, yet is, in reality, the

[1] From an article by Herbert Spencer on "Mr. Balfour's Dialectics."

same as atheism, because their common root is the non-acceptance of a God.

And so I read Herbert Spencer, who says that he does not *desire* to throw off belief in God, but that he is obliged to do so; self-deception is the only other alternative. "There is no pleasure," he says, "in the consciousness of being an infinitesimal bubble on a globe that is itself infinitesimal compared with the totality of things." (I should like to ask him what he understands by "the totality of things.") "Those on whom the unpitying rush of changes inflicts sufferings which are often without remedy, find no consolation in the thought that they are at the mercy of blind forces, which cause, indifferently, now the destruction of a sun, and now the death of an animalcule. Contemplation of a universe which is without intelligible purpose yields no satisfaction. The desire to know what it all means is no less strong in the agnostic than in others, and raises sympathy with them. Failing utterly to find any interpretation himself, he feels a regretful inability to accept the interpretations they offer."

Some one else was saying exactly the same thing to me the other day. "A sort of circumrotation takes place, and in the center of this vortex, endless in time and space, *I* appear, live, and disappear. This is certain. All the rest — *i.e.* the conception of some intelligent being, from which I have proceeded, and for the attainment of whose object I exist in common with all that exists — such a conception is a self-deception."

There are two distinct and mutually contradictory theories of the universe, which may be represented thus: —

The agnostic says, "Myself, a being born of my parents, I observe in the same way as all other living beings which surround me, and which exist under certain conditions subject to my examination and study; and I study myself and other objects, both animate and inanimate, and the conditions in which they exist. And in accordance with this study I order my life. Questions as to origin I investigate in the same way, both by

observation and by experiment, and I attain a greater and greater knowledge of them. As to the question whence all this universe has proceeded, why it exists, and why I exist in it, I leave it unanswered, as I do not see the possibility of answering it as definitely, clearly, and convincingly as I answer questions concerning the conditions of things *in* the universe. And therefore the answer to this question which consists in saying that there exists a supposed rational Being, a God, from whom I have proceeded (it is generally said, 'from whom the world proceeds,' by which is meant the creation of the world, which the Christian teaching does not affirm), which Being, for some reason known to itself, has determined the law of my life — this answer to the question I do not accept, as it does not contain the clearness and demonstrability possessed by the scientific answers to the questions concerning the causes and conditions of various natural phenomena."

So says the agnostic, and in not admitting the possibility of any other knowledge but what is acquired by observation and the analysis of observation, he is, if not right, at least quite logical and consequent.

The Christian, on the other hand, acknowledging God, says, "I am conscious that I exist only because I feel myself to be a rational being. And in feeling myself to be so, I cannot but recognize that my life and that of all that exists must be equally rational. And in order to be so it must have an object. The object of my life must be outside myself, in that Being for which both I and all that exists serve as instruments for the attainment of the object of life. This Being does exist, and I must, in my life, fulfil its law or will. Questions as to the nature of this Being which demands of me the fulfilment of its law, and as to when and how, in time and space, this rational life originated in me and originates in other beings — *i.e.* 'What is God?' 'Is He personal or impersonal?' 'Did He create the world, and how?' 'When did a soul awake in me?' 'At what time, and how, did it originate in others?' 'Whence has it come and whither will it go?' 'In what part of

the body does it reside?'—all these questions I must leave unanswered, because I know beforehand that in the region of their observation and analysis I shall never come to a definite answer, as all will disappear into the infinitude of time and space. For this reason I do not accept the answers given by science as to how the universe (the suns and worlds) has originated, how the soul originates, and in what part of the brain it is located."

In the first instance the agnostic, acknowledging himself to be a mere animal, and therefore admitting that he is subject only to external sensations, does not admit a spiritual origin, and resigns himself to that senselessness of existence which violates the demands of reason.

In the second instance the Christian, acknowledging himself to be only a rational being, and therefore accepting only that which corresponds to the demands of reason, does not acknowledge the adequacy of the data of external experience, and considers those data fantastic and erroneous.

Both are equally right. But the difference between them, and an essential one, lies in the fact that, according to the former conception, everything in the universe is strictly scientific, logical, and rational, except the meaning of the life itself of man and the whole universe; and they have no meaning, and consequently, from such a conception, there may proceed very many interesting and amusing considerations, but, notwithstanding all efforts to the contrary, nothing necessary for guidance in life. Whereas, according to the latter conception, the life of man and of the whole universe acquires a definite, rational meaning, which has the most direct, simple, and universally accessible adaptability to life, at the same time not excluding the possibility of scientific investigations which, in this case, are put in their proper place.

XVI

Nothing better proves the existence of God than the attempts of the evolutionists to accept morality and deduce it from the struggle for existence.

It is obvious that morality cannot emanate from struggle; and yet they feel that we cannot do without it, acknowledge its existence, and endeavor to deduce it from their own propositions; though to deduce it from the theory of evolution is as strange and illogical (or even more so) as to deduce it from the ordinances given by the Hebrew God on Sinai. Their mistake, which consists in denying the consciousness of one's spiritual self as a product of God, a particle of Him, without which there can be no rational view of life, — this mistake forces them to admit an unjustifiable and even contradictory mystery, *i.e.* to admit in the form of morality that same God whom they have excluded from their view of life.

XVII

The other day a Frenchman asked me, "Would it not be sufficient to base morality upon righteousness and beauty?" *i.e.* again that same God whom they are afraid to name.

Let us endeavor to express that which we know, that which is necessary to us, joyful and certain; and God (the same whom you think it necessary to evade) will help us. By naming Him I acknowledge my incompleteness, I, His weak, small vessel, endeavor to open myself — that part of me which can receive Him — in order that He may enter into me, in so far as I am able and worthy to receive Him.

Above all, He is necessary to me in order that I may express whither I am tending and to whom I go. In this monotonous earthly life I may not feel Him, I may do without this form of thought and expression; but in

relation to this passage from the past life into this one, and from this one into another, I cannot avoid expressing by Him that from whence I come and whither I am going, this being the form of expression nearest to the true character of the case; from God to God, *i.e.* from that which is outside of time and space to the same again.

XVIII

It is not that I altogether agree with what you say about the understanding and about God, but my thoughts are in conformity with yours. I do not say that I agree, because in speaking about these matters it is often difficult to express accurately what one thinks, and words may say too much or too little, and therefore it is never possible to admit that a certain way of formulating completely corresponds to one's conception. But I see that we think and feel in the same direction, and this gives me great pleasure. It is impossible not to think about these matters, but each of us involuntarily thinks in his own way. To formulate one's thoughts in the way it has been done in various creeds is not only useless, but may be dangerous. It is possible and necessary to formulate deductions which are applicable to life, as did Moses: "Thou shalt not kill!" or Christ: "Resist not evil!" I repeat, however, that I think in the same direction, and quite agree with you that the understanding is attainable in proportion to one's purity, humility, and love.

XIX

What am I here, abandoned in the midst of this world? To whom shall I turn? From whom shall I seek an answer? — From men?

They do not know; they laugh; they do not wish to know. They say, "That is nonsense. Do not think about it. Here is the world and its attractions — live!"

But they shall not deceive me. I know that they do

not believe what they say. They too, like me, are tormented and suffer from the fear of death, of themselves, and of Thee, Lord, whom they do not wish to name.

I too, for long did not name Thee, and I too did the same that they do. I know this deception, and how it oppresses the heart, and how terrible is the fire of despair which is concealed in the heart of him who does not name Thee. However much they strive to quench it, it will burn up their heart as it used to burn mine.

But, Lord, I named Thee, and my sufferings ceased. My despair has passed.

I cursed my weakness, but I seek Thy way and do not despair. I feel Thy nearness, feel Thy help when I walk in Thy ways, and Thy pardon when I stray from thee.

Thy way is clear and plain. Thy yoke is easy and Thy burden light, but I have long wandered outside Thy ways, long in the abominations of my youth have I proudly flung off every burden, freed myself from every yoke, and untaught myself to walk in Thy ways; and both Thy yoke and Thy burden have become heavy for me, though I know they are good and light.

Lord, pardon the errors of my youth, and help me to bear Thy yoke as joyfully as I accept it.

POSTSCRIPT

TO THE

"LIFE AND DEATH OF DROZHIN"[1]

MOSES, in his commandments given to mankind five thousand years ago, laid down the law: *Thou shalt not kill.* The same command has been preached by all the prophets; the same law has been preached by the sages and teachers of the whole world; the same law was preached by Christ, who forbade not only murder, but everything that might lead to it, all provocation and anger against one's brother. And the same is written in the heart of every man so clearly that no action is more opposed to the whole being of every unperverted man than the murder of his own kind — of

[1] Yevdokim Nikititch Drozhin, or Drozhzhin, was born August 11, 1866, at Tolstui Lug in the Government of Kursk, Russia. His parents were peasants. He early displayed great love for learning, and before he was seventeen he was an assistant in a local parochial school. Afterward he received instruction in the Teacher's Seminary at Byelgorod. Through the influence of a young peasant from his own locality — Nikolaï Trofimovitch Izyumchenko — he became imbued with socialistic and revolutionary views, and on this account was not allowed to graduate, but afterward he qualified as a teacher and accepted a position as village teacher at Chernitcheva, where he remained two years. In 1899 he made the acquaintance of D. A. Hilkof, and fell under the influence of Count Tolstoï's writings. His literary activities and his exchange of letters with Izyumchenko and others brought upon him the attention of the police and he was arrested. Nearly all the rest of his life is the story of his resistance of the military conscription in accordance with Tolstoï's explanation of Christ's doctrine of non-resistance. He was enrolled in the so-called Disciplinary Battalion, where he was treated with the greatest harshness as if he had been a criminal instead of a Christian. Owing to his hardships his health was broken, and he died of consumption in prison at Voronezh, February 7, 1895. His friend, C. I. Popof, wrote his life, which was published by Vladimir Tchertkof in 1898, together with the present postscript of Count Tolstoï. — ED.

a human being. And here, notwithstanding the fact that this law of God was clearly revealed to us by Moses, by the prophets, and by Christ, and is written so ineradicably in our hearts that there can be no doubt of its obligation upon us, not only this law is not recognized in our world, but a law absolutely opposed to this is recognized — the law of the obligation for every man of our time to be enrolled in the military service; in other words, to stand in the ranks of murderers, to take an oath of readiness to commit murder, to learn the trade of killing, and actually to kill one's fellow-men whenever this is required.[1]

In the time of heathendom, the Christians were commanded to express in words their recantation of belief in Christ and God, and as a sign of their recantation to offer sacrifices to the heathen gods.

Now, in our time, Christians are compelled to renounce Christ and God, not only by the offer of sacrifice to the heathen gods — to offer sacrifices to the heathen gods is possible even while remaining a Christian at heart — but also by doing an action which is most indubitably opposed to Christ and God and forbidden by Christ and God — to take an oath of readiness to commit murder, and very frequently to commit murder itself.

And as formerly men were found who would not consent to worship the heathen gods, and for their faith in Christ and God sacrificed their lives, so also now there have been and are men who will not renounce Christ and God, who will not consent to take oaths of their readiness to commit murder, who will not enter the ranks of murderers, and who, in behalf of their faith, perish in the most horrible sufferings, as was the case with Drozhin whose life is told in this book.

[1] In countries where there is no obligation of military obedience, God's law, and that of conscience concerning murder, although not so evidently, is nevertheless broken by all citizens because the service, the enlistment and the maintenance of armies, put on the basis of money consciously paid by all the citizens for the business of murder, considered necessary by all, is exactly the same kind of consent to murder and coöperation in it as a personal participation in military service. — AUTHOR'S NOTE.

And as in days gone by those who were accounted half foolish, strange people, the martyrs of Christianity who perished because they did not wish to renounce Christ, merely by their faith in Christ destroyed the heathen world, and cleared the way for Christianity, so now also, men like Drozhin, who are accounted half foolish and fanatical for preferring tortures and death to disobeying God's law, by their very faith in this law are destroying the existent cruel order of things more effectually than a revolution, and are revealing to men a new and joyous state of universal brotherhood, the coming of the kingdom of God which the prophets foretold and the foundations of which were laid by Christ eighteen hundred years ago.

But besides the fact that men like Drozhin, who refuse to renounce God and Christ, by their action help to bring about the coming of that kingdom of God predicted by the prophets, they show by their example the only undoubted route whereby that kingdom of God may be attained, and all that stands in the way of its establishment may be destroyed.

The distinction between the martyrdoms of Christianity and those of the present day consists only in the fact that then the heathen demanded heathen deeds from the Christians; while now men who are not heathen but Christians, or at least call themselves so, demand of Christians heathen and most horribly heathen deeds, such as murder, which the heathen never demanded: and in this, that then the power of heathendom rested on its ignorance, on the fact that it did not know, did not understand Christianity; while now the cruelty of so-called Christianity rests on deception, on conscious deception.

Then, in order to free Christianity from violence, it was necessary to persuade the heathen of the truth of Christianity; but this in large measure it was impossible to do. Julian the Apostate and many better men of that time were truly persuaded that the heathen religion was an enlightenment and a blessing, while Christianity was darkness, ignorance, and evil. But now, in order to

free Christianity from violence and cruelty, it is necessary only to lay bare the deception of a false Christianity. But this deception is laid bare by one simple, inflexible law of truth, which inevitably invites the false Christian powers to use violence by the torture and murder of Christians for the observation of the very thing which they preach.

Formerly the Christian who refused to worship the heathen gods would say to the heathen: —

"I renounce your faith, I am a Christian, and I cannot and will not serve your gods, but I will serve the only true God and His Son, Jesus Christ."

And the heathen authorities punished him because he preached a religion which they considered false and dangerous, and his punishment did not contain any contradiction, and brought no reproach on that heathen religion in the name of which he was punished.

But now the Christian who renounces murder preaches his doctrine, not to heathen any longer, but to men who call themselves Christians. And if he says, "I am a Christian, and I cannot and will not carry out the demand to murder, which is opposed to the Christian law," then they cannot say to him, as the heathen used to say, "You are practising a false and dangerous religion, and therefore we punish you;" but they say to him: "We also are Christians, but you do not properly understand Christianity when you declare that the Christian cannot kill. The Christian may and must kill when he is commanded to do so by any one who, at a certain moment, considers himself his superior. And for the reason, that you do not agree with the doctrine that the Christian ought not to love his enemies, but ought to kill them all when he is bidden, we Christians who are preaching the law of humility, love, and forgiveness, punish you."

It has come about that the powers calling themselves Christian at every such collision with the men that renounce murder are compelled in the most palpable and triumphant way to be apostates to that Christian and moral law on which alone their power is based.

Moreover, unhappily for the false powers and happily for all humanity, the conditions of military service have become of late entirely different from what they used to be, and consequently the demands of the powers have become still more evidently unchristian, and the refusals to fulfil these demands have become convincing.

Formerly, scarcely a hundredth of all the population was called to the military service, and the authorities might have well supposed that men of a low order of morality would enter the service, such as would find nothing contrary to their Christian consciences in doing so, as used to be the case to a certain degree when men were sent off as soldiers for a punishment. Then, if they summoned to the military service a man who, by his moral qualities, could not be a murderer, this was an unfortunate accident and an exception.

But now, when all men are compelled to undergo military obligations, the best of them, those that are most Christianly disposed and farthest from the possibility of taking part in murder, all have to confess themselves as murderers and apostates from God.

Formerly, the army raised by the authorities was composed of ragged, coarse, unchristian, and ignorant men or volunteers and mercenaries; formerly no one or almost no one read the Gospels, and men did not know its spirit, but believed what the priests told them; and formerly only a few, especially fanatically inclined people, sectaries, considered it a sin to serve in the army, and refused to do so.

But now there is not a single man in Christian countries who would not be consciously under obligations, with his money, and in a large part of Europe personally, to take part in preparations for murder or in murder itself; now almost all men know the Gospels and the spirit of Christ's teachings, all know that the priests are bribed impostors, and no one but the most clownish of men believe in them; and now already not only sectaries, but men who do not preach any special dogma, men of cultivation, free-thinkers, renounce military service, and not only renounce it for themselves, but openly

declare to every one that murder is not compatible with the profession of Christianity.

And, therefore, one such refusal of military service like Drozhin's, a refusal maintained in spite of tortures and death — one such refusal shakes the whole colossal fabric of violence based on falsehood, and threatens it with destruction.

Terrible force is lodged in the hands of the authorities, and not merely a material force, — a vast amount of money, institutions, riches, submissive functionaries of the clergy and the army, — the mighty spiritual forces of influence are lodged in the hands of the government. It can, unless it is bribed, suppress, annihilate, all those that are opposed to it. The suborned clergy preaches to the soldiers in the churches; suborned writers write books justifying the army; in the schools, those of higher and those of lower grade, false catechisms are made obligatory, and the children are taught in accordance with them that to kill in war and in executing justice is not only possible, but mandatory. All those that enter the army take the oath of allegiance; everything that might reveal the deception is sternly repressed and punished — the most terrible punishments are inflicted on men that refuse to carry out the demands of service in the army, that is, of murder.

And wonderful to relate, all this vast potential mass of men, armed with all the powers of human authority, trembles, and hides itself, feeling its fault, and shakes in its very being, and is ready at any minute to crumble and fly into powder, at the appearance of a single man like Drozhin who would not yield to human demands, but obeyed the law of God and was faithful to it.[1]

[1] Mr. E. I. Popof in a note says: "In September I sent to one of the newspapers a brief obituary of Drozhin, relating the cause of his imprisonment, sickness, and death, and this obituary was soon reprinted in other periodicals: *Nedyelya* (The Week), No. 30; *Russkiya Vyedomosti*, No. 250; *Saratovsky Listok*, No. 103; and strangely enough, the government, it would seem, was obliged to be satisfied with the promulgation, though unofficial, of the severity with which it punished disobedience to military demands, but at the same time, a few days after the obituary was published, it sent a secret circular to all the newspaper offices, forbidding any mention of this man and his work to be made."

And in our day men like Drozhin are not unique; there are thousands, tens of thousands, and their number, and what is better their significance, increases every year and every hour. In Russia we know tens of thousands of men who refused to take the oath of allegiance to the new Tsar, and who regarded military service as murder, inconsistent not merely with Christianity, but with the commonest demands of honor, justice, and morality. We know such men in all the countries of Europe; we know about the Nazarenes who appeared more than fifty years ago in Austria and Servia, and who, from a few hundreds, have now increased to more than thirty thousand, refusing participation in military service in spite of all persecution.

We knew, not long ago, a very highly educated man of perfect independence of thought, an army surgeon, who refused military service because he considered contrary to his conscience service of such an institution as the army, meant only to inflict violence on men and murder them. But, however important it is that there are many of these men, and that they are all the time increasing, it is still more important that the only true way has been found on which humanity undoubtedly proceeds toward its emancipation from the chains of evil that bind it, and that no one and nothing can any longer hinder it, since no violent efforts for the annihilation of evil are required for deliverance along this route; it disappears of itself and melts away as wax in the fire, and all it requires is only not to take part in it. And in order not to take part in this evil from which we suffer, we need no especial intellectual or physical exertions; all it requires is to yield to our nature, to be good and upright before God and in our own eyes.

"You wish me to be a murderer and I cannot do this; both God and my own conscience forbid it. And therefore do with me what you wish, but I will not kill or prepare for murder, or assist in it."

Now this simple reply, which every man ought infallibly to make because it proceeds out of the very consciousness of the men of our day, is destroying all the evils

of violence which have so long weighed down the world. The statement is made that it says this in the sacred Scriptures:[1]—

Let every soul be in subjection to the higher powers: for there is no power but of God; and the powers that be are ordained of God. Therefore he that resists the power withstands the ordinance of God, and they that withstand shall receive to themselves judgment. For rulers are not a terror to the good work, but to the evil. And wouldst thou have no fear of the power? do that which is good, and thou shall have praise from the same: for he is a minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he bears not the sword in vain: for he is a minister of God, an avenger for wrath to him that does evil. Wherefore you must be in subjection not only because of the wrath, but also for conscience' sake. For for this cause ye pay tribute also; for they are ministers of God's service, attending continually upon this very thing. Render to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor.

And therefore it is necessary to be obedient to the authorities.

But now, this most politic Paul, who was telling the Romans that they must be obedient to the authorities, says quite another thing to the Ephesians:—

Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world-rulers of the darkness of this age, against the terrestrial spirits of wickedness.[2]

Paul's advice to the Romans in regard to subjection to the existing authorities can in no wise be reconciled with Christ's words, the whole meaning of which consists in emancipating men from the powers of the world and subjecting them to the power of God alone:—

[1] Rom. xiii. 1–7.
[2] Eph. vi. 10–12 (author's translation).

If the world hates you, you know that it hated me before it hated you (John xv. 18).

If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you (John xv. 20).

If you were of the world, the world would love its own, but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you (John xv. 19).

They will deliver you up to the councils, and in their synagogues they will scourge you, and before governors and kings shall you stand for my sake for a testimony unto them (Matt. x. 18; Mark xiii. 9).

And you shall be hated of all men for my name's sake (Matt. x. 22).

They shall lay their hands on you and shall persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons, bringing you before kings and governors for my name's sake (Luke xxi. 12).

Whoever kills you shall think he is offering service unto God. And these things will they do, because they have not known the Father nor me. But these things have I spoken unto you, that when their hour is come, you may remember them, how I told you (John xvi. 2–4).

Fear them not therefore; for there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed; and hid that shall not be known (Matt. x. 26).

And be not afraid of them who kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul, but rather fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body (Matt. x. 28).

The prince of this world has been judged (John xvi. 11).

Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world (John xvi. 33).

Christ's whole teaching is a pointing out of the way of emancipation from the power of the world, and Christ, even while He Himself was persecuted, predicted to His disciples that, if they put their faith in His teachings, the world would persecute them. And He advised them to be of good cheer, and not fear their persecutors. But not only did He teach them this by His words; He, by His whole life and His relations to the authorities, gave them an example of how they ought to treat those

that wanted to persecute them. Christ not only did not submit to the authorities, but He kept accusing them: He accused the Pharisees of destroying God's law by their human traditions; He accused them of a false observance of the Sabbath, of a false way of sacrificing in the temples; He accused them for all their hypocrisy and cruelty; He accused the cities of Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum, and He predicted their destruction.

To the question whether He would pay the tribute imposed at His entrance into Capernaum, He said pointedly that His children, that is, His disciples, were free from all tribute, and were not obliged to pay it; and only that He might not offend the tax-collectors, that He might not tempt them to the sin of committing violence, did He command that the stater which was found by chance in the fish, and which did not belong to any one and had not been taken from any one, should be handed over.

To the crafty question whether tribute should be paid to Cæsar, He said: —

"*Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's.*"

In other words, give to Cæsar that which belongs to him and was made by him — money; but God's property, that which God has made and has lodged in you — your soul, your conscience — render up to no one except to God, and therefore do not do for Cæsar anything that God has forbidden. And this answer astonished them all by its boldness, and at the same time by its inevitableness.[1]

When Christ was brought before Pilate as a conspira-

[1] Not merely utter misconception of Christ's teaching, but complete unwillingness to comprehend it, can permit the astonishing misinterpretation whereby the words *to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's*, are taken to mean the unavoidability of subjection to Cæsar. In the first place, there is no question of subjection; in the second place, if Christ had recognized the obligation of a money tribute and therefore of subjection, He would have said frankly, "Yes, it must be paid," but He said *render unto Cæsar what is his* — that is to say, money — but your life to God; and by these last words He not only did not encourage subjection to the authorities, but on the contrary He showed that in everything that belongs to God one ought not to be subject to Cæsar. — AUTHOR'S NOTE.

tor who was stirring up the people and commanding them not to pay tribute to Cæsar,[1] He, saying what He found it necessary to say, astonished and disturbed all the functionaries by paying no attention to their questions, refusing to answer them. And for this accusing of the authorities and disobedience to them He was condemned and put to death.

The whole history of the suffering and death of Christ is nothing else than the history of those calamities to which every man must be subjected who follows Christ's example in obedience to God, and disobedience to the powers of the world. And now they would persuade us that all Christ's teaching must not only be amended, but changed, in consequence of inconsiderate and crafty words written by Paul to the Romans.

But above and beyond the fact that Paul's words are contrary to Christ's life and teachings, with every desire to be subject to the authorities, as Paul commands, not out of fear but in accordance with conscience, this has become in our time utterly impossible. Passing by the inner contradiction between Christianity and subjection to the authorities — subjection to the authorities, not out of fear, but in accordance with conscience, has become impossible in our time, because, in consequence of the universal spread of knowledge, power as something worthy of respect, something lofty, and above all something definite and complete, has been utterly annihilated, and there is no possibility of rehabilitating it. Now it was a good thing, not from fear but from conscience, to be subject to authority when men saw in authority what the Romans saw, an emperor-God; or as the Chinese see in the God-inspired son of heaven; or as in the Middle Ages, yes, up to the very Revolution, in kings or emperors, God-anointed sovereigns; or as not long since here in Russia the common people saw in the Tsar a terrestrial god; when men did not imagine tsars, kings, and emperors as anything else than gods in supreme positions performing wise and glorious actions: but, as it is now, when, notwithstand-

[1] Luke xxiii. 2.

ing all the endeavors of the authorities and all their partizans, and even of their subjects, to restore the fascination of power, education, history, experience, the common intercourse of men, have destroyed this glamour so that it is as impossible ever to restore it as to restore the ice melted in the spring, and just as impossible to build anything substantial on it as it is to go in a sledge on melting ice and an opening river.

What is to be done now when all, with the exception of the most boorish and uncultivated, who, all the time decreasing in numbers, know very well what kind of depraved people were Louis XI. of France, Elizabeth of England, John IV. of Russia, Catherine, Napoleon, Nicholas I., who reigned and disposed of the fates of millions; and who reigned, not in consequence of any holy, inevitable law, as it used to be thought, but simply because these people were able by various deceptions, tricks, crimes, so to strengthen their power that they could not be cast down, punished, or expelled, as afterward Charles I., Louis XVI., Maximilian of Mexico, Louis Philippe, and others have been.

What is to be done now, when all know that the kings and emperors reigning at the present time not only are not extraordinary, saintly, great, wise men engaged in advancing the interests of their peoples, but on the contrary are for the most part badly educated, ill informed, boastful, depraved, often very stupid and wicked men, occupied not at all with the well-being of their subjects, but with their personal interests, and especially with the desperate task of bolstering up their tottering power, maintained only by chicanery and fraud.

But over and above the fact that men now see the stuff which make the sovereigns who used to seem to them exceptional beings, that men now have looked behind the scenes of this theatrical representation and find it impossible ever to re-create the illusion they used to have, they see and know this also, that these sovereigns do not really reign themselves, but in constitutional monarchies the power is wielded by members of chambers and ministers who have obtained their positions

by intrigues and bribes, and in non-constitutional monarchies by wives, ministries, flatterers, and all kinds of assistants, who manage to attach themselves to their courts.

How can a man feel any respect for power and submit himself to it, not out of fear, but in accordance with his conscience, when he knows that this power is nothing existent apart from himself, but is the outcome of the intrigue, the chicanery of men, and is constantly passing from one person to another. A man who knows this not only cannot conscientiously submit to the power, but he cannot help striving to destroy the existent power and get into possession of it himself; that is to say, having crept into power, he grasps as much as he can. This is what happens in reality.

The power of which Paul spoke, the power to which one may submit conscientiously, has already outlived its time. It no longer exists. Like the ice, it has melted and can no longer support anything. The formerly firm and solid surface of the river has become a liquid, and in order to go on it the sledge and horses are no longer available, you must have a boat and oars. Just exactly in the same way the scale of life in consequence of enlightenment has changed to such a degree that power, in the sense in which it was formerly understood, has no longer any place in our world, but remains a coarse expression of violence and deception. But it is impossible to submit to violence and deception "not because of the wrath but for conscience' sake."

"But how not submit to the authorities? If one does not submit to the authorities, there will be terrible misfortunes; evil men will torment, oppress, and kill the righteous."

I also say, "How avoid submitting to the authorities, how make up our minds not to submit to the authorities, to any undoubted power, that from which we cannot escape, under which we always find ourselves, and the demands of which we know unquestionably, unmistakably?"

It is said, "How make up our minds not to submit to the authorities?"

What powers? In Catherine's time, when Pugatchof[1] was in revolt, half of the people clung to him and were under his power. Which power, then, should one have submitted to — Catherine's or Pugatchof's? Yes, and in the reign of that same Catherine who robbed her husband of his power though they had taken an oath to obey him as Tsar, which should we have felt obliged to obey? Peter III., as before, or Catherine?

Not one Russian Tsar, from Peter I. till Nicholas I. inclusively, mounted the throne in such a way as to leave it evident whose power one must submit to. To whom should one have submitted — Peter I. or Sophia, or Ioann, Peter's elder brother? Sophia had equal rights to the throne, and the proof of it is found in the fact that after her women reigned who had less claims to the throne — the two Catherines, Anna, Elizabeth. Whose power should one have submitted to after Peter, when courtiers alone placed on the throne a soldier's wife, the mistress of the minister — Menshikof, Sheremetief — Peter — Catherine I.? And how about Peter II., then Anna and Elizabeth, and finally Catherine II., who had no more right to the throne than Pugatchof, while in the time of her reign one legitimate heir — Ioann — was kept in prison and was killed by her orders, while another legitimate heir was Paul, a youth who had attained his majority? And whose authority should one have submitted to, the authority of Paul or of Alexander at the time when the conspirators who killed Paul were as yet only planning to kill him? And whose power should one have submitted to, Constantine or Nicholas, when Nicholas accepted the power from Constantine?

All history is the history of one power balanced against another, as well in Russia as in all other countries. More-

[1] Sophia of Anhalt, married under the name of Catherine to Peter III., found his brutality unendurable, and is believed to have caused his death. In 1774, a Cossack, Emilian Pugatchof, raised an army of runaway serfs, robbers, and pirates, and proclaimed that he was the Tsar Peter III. The troops sent against him joined him, and people were inclined to believe his claim. Catherine sent Alexandr Bibikof to conquer him. The impostor fled to the southern Volga, but was at last hemmed in and surrendered by his own troops, and was cruelly executed at Moscow. — Ed.

over, even not in the time of civil war and the suppression of certain monarchs and the substitution of them by others, in the most peaceful times, it was necessary to submit to Arakcheyef who had usurped the power, or to strive to overturn him and persuade the Tsar of the inability of his ministers. Men do not dispose of supreme power, but of its servants; must one submit to these servants when their demands are evidently wicked and harmful?

So that, however much we might wish to submit to authority, it is impossible, since there is no one definite earthly power, and all earthly powers totter, change, and are at war with one another. How and where is any power genuine? And so what power shall one submit to?

But besides the fact that the power which demands submission to itself is doubtful, and we may not know whether it is genuine or not, this dubious power demands of us no equal, no harmless actions, such as the building of pyramids, temples, palaces, or even the service of the powerful ones of this world and satisfying their whims and luxuries. It might be possible to do that.

But this questionable power demands of us the thing most terrible to man — murder, the preparation for it, the acknowledgment of our readiness for it; demands an action which is clearly contrary to the law of God and therefore destroys the soul. Can I, on account of submission to the accidental, vacillating, contradictory human power, forget the demands of the one power of God which is so clearly and unquestionably known to me, and thus destroy my soul?

"One must submit to the authorities."

"Yes, one most submit to the authorities," say I also, "only not to the authority of an emperor, a king, a president, a parliament, or their appointed chiefs, whom I don't know and whom I have nothing in common with, but to the authority of God, whom I do know, and with whom I live, from whom I received my soul, and to whom I shall render up my soul to-morrow."

It is said, "There will be misfortunes if we do not submit to the authorities."

And this is the truth if by "authority" is meant genuine authority, and not human deception, which is called power, authority. These misfortunes exist, and terrible, horrible misfortunes which we shall experience for the precise reason that we do not submit to the power of God, — the one that is free from doubt, that has been revealed to us both in the Scriptures and in our hearts. We say: Our misfortunes consist in this, that the rich and the idler flourish, and the poor and industrious go to the wall; in this, that the people are deprived of land, and therefore must work like galley slaves in factories, making things which are of no use to them; in this, that the people get intoxicated on the vodka which the government sells to them; in this, that young men go as soldiers, become dissipated, carry diseases, and are separated from a simple life of labor; in this, that the rich sit on the judgment-seat and the poor lie in prisons; in this, that the people are stupefied in schools and churches, and functionaries and the clergy are rewarded for it by money taken from the people; in this, that all the energies of the people — men and money — are expended in wars and on the army, and this army is put into the hands of leaders, who, by means of it, suppress everything that is not consonant with their advantage.

These misfortunes are terrible. But what is the source of them? And on what are they based?

Simply on the fact that men do not submit to the one true power and its law which is inscribed on their hearts, but submit to artificial human regulations which they call the law. If men submitted to the one true power of God and His law, they would not take upon themselves the obligation of killing their fellow-men, they would not go as soldiers, and they would not contribute money for the support and hire of the army.

And if there were no army, there would be none of those cruelties and injustices which it entails. Only by means of the army can one establish and support that order, whereby all the land is in the hands of those that do not work on it, while those that work on it are de-

prived of it; only by means of the army could they take away the labors of the poor and give them to the rich; only by means of the army could they intentionally stupefy the people, and deprive them of the possibility of true enlightenment.

The army consists of soldiers — we ourselves are the soldiers! If we refuse to be soldiers, there will be nothing of the sort.

The position of people is now such that nothing can change except obedience to a true, and not a false, authority.

"But this new state of things without an army, without government, will be many times worse than that in which we now are," is the reply to this.

"Worse for whom?" I ask. "For those that are now in authority, for one one-hundredth of the whole people? In truth, for this part of the people it will be worse. But not for the working population, deprived of land and the products of their labor, simply because for these nine-tenths of the people their position cannot be worse than what it is now."

But by what right do we suppose that the position of the people will be worse off from the fact that they become obedient to the law against murder, revealed to them by God, and put into their hearts? Why, to say that every thing in this world will become worse, if the men in it obey the law which was given to them by God for their guidance in this world, is equivalent to saying that it would be worse if men would use a given machine, not according to their fancy, but in accordance with the direction for its use given by the one who selected and set up the machine.

There was a time when humanity lived like the wild beasts, and every one took for his own life all he could, robbing any one else of what he wanted, slaying and slaughtering his neighbors.

Then came the time when men coalesced into societies, into kingdoms, and began to divide off into nations, defending themselves from other nations. Men became less beastlike, but nevertheless they considered it not

only possible, but even indispensable, to kill their enemies, external and internal.

But now the time is coming, indeed it has already come, when men, according to Christ's words, are entering into a new state of the brotherhood of all men, into that new state long ago foretold by the prophets when all men should be taught of God, should unlearn the art of war, beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning-hooks, and enter into the kingdom of God, the kingdom of unity and peace.

This state was foretold by the prophets; but Christ's teaching showed how and by whom it could be realized, but especially by brotherly unity, one of the first phenomena of which was to be the annihilation of violence. And the importance of annihilating violence is already recognized by men, and therefore this condition becomes as unavoidable as formerly after the wild state came the monarchical state.

Humanity in our time is passing through the birth-pangs of this approaching kingdom of God, and this travail will infallibly end with birth. But the dawning of this new life does not come of itself; its approach depends on us. We must do it. The kingdom of God is within us.

And in order to bring about the kingdom of God within us, I repeat it, we need no special intellectual or physical powers; we need only to be what we are, what God made us — that is to say, reasonable and, above all, righteous beings, heeding the voice of our consciences.

"But that is the very difficulty — men are not reasonable and are not righteous beings," I hear said by those who, in order to have the right to be wicked, declare that the whole human race is bad, and that this is not only the true revealed religious truth, but that taught by experience. "Men are all wicked and unreasonable," they assert, "and therefore it is indispensable that the reasonable and righteous people maintain order."

Now, if all men are lacking in reason and are bad,

where are we to find the reasonable and the good? and if there are such, then how shall we know them? and if we know them, then by what means shall we — and who will be these *we?* — place them at the head of other men? But even if we succeed in placing these exceptionally reasonable and righteous men at the head of the others, then will not these reasonable and righteous men cease to be such if they began to use violence and punish the unreasonable and wicked? And what is most important, you say that in order to prevent certain robbers, thieves, and murderers from maltreating and killing men, you institute courts, the police, the army, which will certainly maltreat and kill men, whose obligation will consist wholly in doing this, and you will induce all men to these institutions. But, you see, by such a method you really exchange a small and suppositious evil for a great universal evil everywhere consummated. In order to resist certain imaginary murderers you compel all men to be really murderers. And so I repeat, that, for the establishment of a fraternal bond among men, there is no need of any special effort, either intellectual or physical, but only to be what God has made us, reasonable and righteous beings, and to act in accordance with these qualities.

It does not fall to each one of us to suffer the experience which Drozhin went through — and if it does befall us, God help us to endure it without changing to Him; but whether we wish it or not, to each one of us, even if we live in a country where there is no military obligation or if we are not accustomed to obey it, to each of us is given the chance, in one way or another, to submit, though it may be in lower and easier forms, to the experience, and of willy-nilly taking his stand on the side of the oppressors and even becoming one of them, or on the side of the oppressed and helping them to bear their trials or even sharing them. To every one of us, even if we do not take a direct part in the persecutions against the latter-day martyrs, such as emperors, ministers, governors, judges, who sign the decrees for the torture of these martyrs, or such a still more direct part

in their tortures as is taken by the jailers, guards, and executioners, — to each one of us, nevertheless, is offered the chance of taking the most active part in these deeds by the judgments which we pronounce upon them in print, in letters, and in conversations.

Often, simply because we are too lazy to think of the meaning of such a phenomenon, simply because we do not wish to disturb our comfort by a lively representation of what these men must experience who, for their justice, candor, and philanthropy, are suffering in jails and exile, we, not thinking of what we are saying, repeat the criticisms which we have heard or read: "What is to be done? They deserve it. These are dangerous fanatics; the government must put an end to such performances," — or words to that effect, which uphold the persecutors, and increase the sufferings of the victims. All of us think a dozen times of some action, of the spending of a certain sum of money, of the breaking up or building of a house; but to speak a word seems so unimportant that we speak for the most part without thinking. But meantime speech is the most significant of all the actions which we can do.

From words grows public opinion. And public opinion alone is higher than all the kings and rulers, directs all the acts of men. And therefore every one of our judgments on behavior like Drozhin's may be the act of God bringing about the coming of the kingdom of God, the brotherhood of men, helping those advanced men who give their lives to bring it about, and it may be an act hostile to God, opposing Him, and coöperating in the torture of those men who are giving themselves to His service.

Drozhin, in his diary, relates the cruel effect on him of such a frivolous and God-opposing word. He tells how in the first period of his imprisonment, when, notwithstanding all his physical sufferings and humiliations, he still continued to experience a joyous, calming consciousness that he was doing his duty, how at this time he was affected by a letter from another revolutionist who, out of *love for him*, urged him to take pity on him-

self, to recant and fulfil the demands of the authorities — take the oath of allegiance and serve in the army.

Evidently this young man, with revolutionary inclinations and according to the ordinary code of the revolutionists fully admitted to their ranks, according to the principle, *the end justifies the means* — all compromises with conscience — did not in the least comprehend the religious feelings which guided Drozhin, and therefore wrote him thoughtlessly, advising him not to destroy himself as a weapon useful for the revolution, and to fulfil all the demands of the authorities. These words, it would seem, ought not to have any special significance, but nevertheless Drozhin writes that they robbed him of his peace of mind and that they made him ill.

And this is comprehensible. All men who move humanity forward, and who are the first and only ones to enter upon that path whereby soon all will be traveling, find it no easy task to get started, but are always met with suffering and inward struggle. The inner voice invites them along the new way; all attachments, traditions, weaknesses, — everything pulls them back. And at such moments of unstable equilibrium every word of encouragement or of discouragement has enormous influence. The most powerful man may be hindered by a child when this man is putting forth all his forces in order to move a weight beyond his strength. Drozhin experienced a terrible despair at these seemingly unimportant words of his friend, and he recovered his calmness only when he received a letter from his friend Izyumchenko, who was joyously bearing the same lot, and who expressed a firm conviction in the propriety of what they were doing.[1]

And, therefore, however far we personally may stand from any action of this kind, we always involuntarily

[1] This friend, for the same kind of refusal to take part in military service, was incarcerated in Kursk, in the city jail. Now, while I am writing this, he is shut up, without permission to see any one whoever, in the strongest *sekret*, or dungeon, of the Moscow forwarding prison, on his way to the government of Tobolsk, where he has been exiled by the emperor's decision. — AUTHOR'S NOTE.

participate in them, we have our influence on them by our relation to them, by our judgment of them.

If we take the standpoint of the revolutionary friend, if we reckon that, owing to the fact that maybe sometime, somewhere, we may be in a condition to act on the external conditions of life, we may and must decline the first demands of conscience. We not only do not moderate the sufferings and struggles of men who are rushing to the service of God, but we are also preparing these sufferings of the internal discord for all those that have to decide a dilemma in life. But to decide this comes to all.

And, therefore, all of us, however far we stand from such events, have a share in them through our opinions and judgments. And an inadvertent, frivolous-spoken word may be the cause of the keenest sufferings for the best people in the world. It is impossible to be too careful of the use of this weapon. *By thy words art thou justified and by thy words art thou condemned.*

But many of us are called to take part in such events, not by words alone, but also far more directly. I refer to the clerks who, in one way or another, take part in those hopeless persecutions which only strengthen the movement, such as the government institutes against men like Drozhin. I speak of the participants in these persecutions, beginning with the emperor, the ministers, the judges, the procurers, down to the jailers and guards who torture these martyrs. Here all of you, participants in these persecutions, know that this man whom you are torturing is not only no criminal, but an exceptionally good man, that he is tortured because he wishes with all the forces of his soul to be good; you know simply that he is young, that he has friends, a mother, that he loves you and pardons you. And him you may shut up in prison, strip to the skin, starve, deprive of food, drink, sleep, prevent from meeting his relations and friends.

How can you, O emperor, who signed such an ukase; O minister, procurer, prison nachalnik, jailer, sit down to your dinner, knowing that he is lying on a cold floor, that, full of torments, he is weeping over your wrath;

how can you caress your child, how can you think of God, of death which will bring you to Him?

However you may pretend to be the executioners of unchangeable laws, you are simply men, and good men, and you are sorry, and we are sorry for you, and only in this pity and love to one another is our life.

You say need compels us to serve in this capacity. Now you know that is not true. You know that there is no poverty, that the word is conventional, that what is poverty for you is luxury for another; you know that you can find another service — one in which you will not have to persecute people, especially such people! You see just as the prophets were persecuted, then Christ, then His disciples, so always those that love men and lead them straight forward to their good have been, and are still, persecuted. Thus, how can you escape being participants in these persecutions?

It is horrible to torture a bird, an animal. How much more horrible to torture a young man, a good, pure youth, filled with love for his fellows, and wishing them well! It is horrible to be a participant in this deed, and above all to be a participant all vainly — to destroy his body, yourselves, your souls, and at the same time not only fail to stop the accomplishment of the work of bringing in the kingdom of God, but, on the other hand, against your will to assist in its triumph!

It is coming and is already at hand.

Moscow, March 16, 1895.

THE END

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